

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 65

Reps. Anthony, Sabo, Hertel, Brenda Carter, Morse, Puri, Breen, Aiyash, Camilleri, Steckloff, Rabhi, Cavanagh, Cherry, Brixie, Peterson, Young, Clemente, LaGrand, Stone, Steenland, Kuppa, Sowerby, Pohutsky, O'Neal, Thanedar, Brabec, Garza, Tyrone Carter, Scott, Hood, Neeley, Hope, Weiss, Haadsma, Koleszar, Ellison, Manoogian, Shannon, Bolden, Witwer and Jones offered the following resolution:

1 A resolution to urge state and federal administrators to
2 increase the number of women and minorities in skilled trade
3 professions and to encourage industry leaders and labor unions to
4 address existing and future shortages in the skilled trades
5 workforce.

6 Whereas, The state of Michigan, and this nation as a whole, is
7 experiencing a significant shortage in skilled trades workers. In
8 Michigan, 80 percent of contracting firms report having a hard time

1 filling salaried or hourly skilled trades positions. The shortage
2 of skilled laborers will be exacerbated over the next decade as
3 skilled tradespersons retire; and

4 Whereas, Near and long-term infrastructure projects will
5 require a larger skilled trades workforce. The U.S. Department of
6 Labor projected job growth in the skilled trades industry at 4
7 percent between 2019 and 2029. According to the National
8 Association of Manufacturers, that amounts to 3.5 million new
9 skilled tradespersons, and the Associated General Contractors
10 predicts a shortage of 250,000 skilled tradespersons per year. In
11 Michigan, the number of skilled trades professionals cannot meet
12 demand, with an expected rate of growth of 47,000 new trade jobs
13 per year through 2026; and

14 Whereas, Women are underrepresented in skilled trades
15 positions despite significant gains. According to the U.S.
16 Department of Labor, women represent less than 5 percent of all
17 skilled trades workers. Despite a three- to four-fold increase
18 since the early 1970s, women only represent 3.1 percent of all
19 electricians, 3.2 percent of all carpenters, and 2.3 percent of all
20 plumbers, pipefitters, and steamfitters; and

21 Whereas, Minorities have historically been and continue to be
22 underrepresented in skilled trades professions. While non-white
23 workers constitute nearly a quarter of the total workforce, they
24 represent less than 15 percent of skilled trades workers. They
25 represent less than 12.2 percent of electricians, 12.1 percent of
26 carpenters, and 11.9 percent of plumbers, pipefitters, and
27 steamfitters; and

28 Whereas, Many women are employed in minimum wage jobs that do
29 not provide benefits, and good-paying trade positions could benefit

1 these low-income households. While women constitute about half of
2 the workforce, they account for 60 percent of the working poor and
3 66 percent of minimum wage employees. Women are also the primary or
4 sole earners for 40 percent of households with children under 18
5 years of age. Workers of color have consistently been several times
6 more likely to be paid poverty level wages; and

7 Whereas, Privately-led efforts in Michigan have started
8 addressing the shortage of women in skilled trades positions.
9 Project Accelerate, founded by Rita Brown, provides women with a
10 primer in the construction trades, and Women In Skilled Trades,
11 founded by Tori Menold and Carol Cool, is an accelerated pre-
12 apprenticeship program that targets single mothers. Pioneers like
13 Adrienne Bennett, the CEO of Benkari and Michigan's first female
14 licensed Master Plumber and this nation's first female African
15 American Master Plumber, continue to demonstrate that, with
16 encouragement and sustained programs, women and minorities can
17 represent an increasing share of skilled workers; and

18 Whereas, National and statewide policies are necessary to
19 create greater access to training and career opportunities for
20 women in the skilled trades. Through administrative and policy
21 efforts, the representative imbalance of tradeswomen can be
22 redressed as state and national programs levy more resources,
23 devote more training opportunities to women, and connect women with
24 registered apprenticeship programs; now, therefore, be it

25 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we urge state
26 and federal administrators to increase the number of women and
27 minorities in skilled trades professions by improving access to
28 skilled training and employment opportunities; and be it further

29 Resolved, That we encourage industry leaders and labor unions

1 to address existing and future shortages in the skilled trades
2 workforce by hiring and training women and minorities; and be it
3 further

4 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the
5 Governor of the state of Michigan, the Director of the Department
6 of Labor and Economic Opportunity, and the United States Secretary
7 of Labor.