

Presentation to Economic and Rural Development Interim Committee

Monday, November 6, 2017

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee. My name is Greta Schouman. To my right is Mr. Charles Humiston, Chairman of the State Apprenticeship Council and Director of the JATC Electrical Apprenticeship Program. Also with us is John Gallegos, a graduate of the ABC Plumbing Apprenticeship Program and Johnnie S. Sanchez, a 4th year Apprentice also in the ABC Plumbing Program. Both are employed by Rodgers Plumbing and Heating, Inc.

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, may I proceed?

Again, I am Greta Schouman, Apprenticeship Director for Associated Builders and Contractors, NM Chapter. We currently train in 4 construction trades: Carpentry, Electrical, Plumbing and Sheet Metal. Two of our apprentices are here today to make comments on the value of apprenticeship.

Recently, the ABC NM Chapter received accreditation as a post-secondary school by the New Mexico Higher Education Department.

For me, the most important aspect of apprenticeship is that it changes lives. We build people. In the more than 10 years I have worked with apprentices I have seen individuals start our program full of doubts about themselves and leave four years later with the confidence that comes from acquiring skills. Many of our graduates formerly worked two and three jobs to make ends meet before coming into the apprenticeship program and now they can purchase a home and spend more time with their family because they are earning a good living as a skilled craftsperson. One graduate said he is now looked up to by his friends and family because of what he achieved through the apprenticeship training. Many go on to accept positions of responsibility within their sponsoring companies as superintendents, project managers and estimators.

Today I want to talk to you about the importance of apprenticeship in workforce development and to create a sustainable workforce not just in construction but other industries as well.

Apprenticeship is a bi-partisan effort. We want to partner with legislators on both sides of the aisle to demonstrate how apprenticeship aligns with the Committee's 2017 Work Plan of developing vocational education and workforce development.

Apprenticeship includes the following components:

- Business involvement
- Structured on-the-job training
- Related instruction
- Increased wages commensurate with higher skill levels
- Nationally recognized credentials

The USDOL recognizes over 1,000 available occupations in Registered Apprenticeship including those in the healthcare, automotive, telecommunications, manufacturing, and agricultural industries as well as construction. State funding is needed to augment industry's contribution to increase and improve apprenticeship programs. Regulation maintains high standards and protects apprenticeship. The State Apprenticeship Council and the Apprenticeship Training and Advisory Committee whose members represent both union and non-union apprenticeship programs serve in an advisory capacity to NMDWS and assist in reviewing policy that affect the day-to-day operation of apprenticeship.

The handout you received gives an overview of apprenticeship in NM and includes statistics that show the economic impact of apprenticeship.

Apprenticeship benefits everyone: the worker, the employer, the industry and the community.

Help us help the State of New Mexico to grow, to thrive and to succeed.

Thank you.