

Gov. Pritzker Signs ‘Illinois Works’ Legislation, Bolstering Diverse Workforce on Capital Projects

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CHICAGO — As the state embarks on a historic \$45 billion capital program, Governor JB Pritzker signed legislation today to strengthen a pillar of Rebuild Illinois and increase diversity in apprenticeships for construction and the building trades.

“Rebuild Illinois is the largest, most robust capital plan in state history. We’re working with our partners to make sure every community in the state benefits from these good jobs – especially those who have been left out for far too long,” said Governor JB

Pritzker. “We’re putting Illinois’ government back on the side of working families, designing a state that is economically prosperous not just for the few, but for every Illinoisan, no matter the color of their skin or their zip code.”

The Illinois Works Jobs Program will help ensure that Illinois residents from all communities not only benefit from capital projects, but also have access to careers in the construction industry and building trades. Today’s effort includes especially those who have been historically underrepresented in those trades.

The law makes a \$25 million investment and works through community-based organizations to recruit new apprentices to work on the construction projects and sets strong apprentice participation goals of 10 percent on public works projects. Through this pre-apprenticeship program, bid credit program and review panel, the new law ensures the Illinois Works Jobs Program can deliver on its goal of building and maintaining a diverse workforce on Rebuild Illinois projects.

“In order to build a healthy and comprehensive economy, we must supply minority businesses with full and fair access to local and state contraction opportunities,” said Sen. Napoleon Harris III (D-Chicago). “I applaud Gov. Pritzker for seeing the significance of this measure and hope to see local governments taking advantage of the business enterprise program to decrease the inequality gap for minority, veterans and female-owned businesses.”

“This legislation creates economic opportunity for working people that have typically been left out of the construction industry,” said House Assistant Majority Leader Will Davis (D- Homewood). “The Rebuild Illinois capital program makes an unprecedented investment in our state, and we’re making sure that benefits all of our communities.”

Senate Bill 177 takes effect January 1, 2020.