



STATE OF WISCONSIN

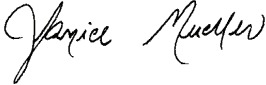
Legislative Audit Bureau

22 East Mifflin Street, Suite 500
Madison, Wisconsin 53703
(608) 266-2818
Fax (608) 267-0410
www.legis.wisconsin.gov/lab

Janice Mueller
State Auditor

DATE: October 14, 2009

TO: Senator Kathleen Vinehout and
Representative Peter Barca, Co-chairpersons
Joint Legislative Audit Committee

FROM: Janice Mueller 
State Auditor

SUBJECT: Proposed Audit of the Participation of Minorities and Women in Construction
Trade Apprenticeships—Background Information

At your request, we have gathered some background information the Joint Legislative Audit Committee may find useful in considering an audit of participation by minorities and women in apprenticeships in the construction trades. Apprenticeships provide individuals with the on-the-job training and related classroom instruction needed to become successfully employed.

The Department of Workforce Development (DWD) regulates and monitors all apprenticeship programs in the state. It promulgates policies and procedures to promote equality of opportunity in apprenticeships, approves all contracts that employers and apprentices execute, and determines whether the contracts' provisions are followed. In addition, local trade committees, which include employers and skilled workers, develop policies and practices for their apprenticeship programs.

Concerns have been raised about the extent to which minorities and women have adequate access to apprenticeships in the construction trades, which account for more than half of all apprenticeships statewide, according to DWD's information. In 1997, there were 6,362 active apprentice contracts in the construction trades, including 314 contracts held by minorities (4.9 percent) and 187 contracts held by women (2.9 percent). In July 2009, there were 5,955 apprentice contracts in the construction trades, including 446 contracts held by minorities (7.5 percent) and 115 contracts held by women (1.9 percent).

An audit of the participation of minorities and women in apprenticeships in the construction trades could:

- quantify the resources DWD has devoted over time to regulating apprenticeships;
- determine detailed information about the extent to which minorities and women have participated in apprenticeships in recent years;

- assess barriers hindering the participation of minorities and women in apprenticeships in the construction trades, as well as any efforts taken by DWD and local trade committees to reduce those barriers;
- analyze DWD's oversight of apprenticeships in the construction trades, including the number and disposition of complaints from apprentices or applicants for apprenticeships who allege discrimination based on race or sex; and
- examine how other surrounding midwestern states regulate apprenticeships and determine whether participation by minorities and women in Wisconsin apprenticeships could be increased by implementing regulatory practices used in other states.

I hope you find this information helpful. If you have any additional questions regarding this request, please contact me.

JM/DS/kc

cc: Senator Robert Jauch
Senator Mark Miller
Senator Robert Cowles
Senator Mary Lazich

Representative Andy Jorgensen
Representative Mark Pocan
Representative Bill Kramer
Representative Samantha Kerkman

Representative Barbara Toles

Roberta Gassman, Secretary
Department of Workforce Development