

THE ROLE OF PUBLIC POLICY IN THE RETENTION AND ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN IN THE SKILLED TRADES

Master of Public Policy Capstone Project

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The Problem

Women have been continually underrepresented in the skilled trades workforce in Alberta. In 2019, 4,600 of the 44,000 registered apprentices were women, roughly equating to 10%

Only 9 trades in Alberta have more than 10% female representation.

Women earned between 76% - 78% of the annual salary of their male counter parts.

60% of employers in Alberta indicated they are not looking to hire “Non-Traditional Apprentices”.

Women enter the trades at a higher rate, but are retained at a lower rate.

Lack of Women report harassment or discrimination during apprenticeship 9 times more often than men.

Policy Solutions

Each solution provides a different counteraction to the 3 key issues faced by women in the skilled trades.

1. Gender Bias and Discrimination
2. Attraction, Retention and Advancement
3. Lack of Critical Mass

Continue funding introductory program and increase funding to programs focused on retention and advancement

Amend reporting to acknowledge gender bias against women and increase gender specific reporting

Classify trades based on workforce composition