



King County

Shannon Braddock

King County Executive

401 Fifth Avenue, Suite 800
Seattle, WA 98104

206-296-9600 Fax 206-296-0194

TTY Relay: 711

www.kingcounty.gov

April 15, 2025

The Honorable Girmay Zahilay
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Zahilay:

I am pleased to transmit a proposed Ordinance that, if enacted, would update the current criteria used to identify economically distressed areas under King County's Priority Hire Program, which aims to prioritize the hiring of local workers from the County's economically distressed areas for inclusion on construction projects. The proposed change reflects a revised methodology to enhance regional uniformity and align with evolving economic and demographic shifts.

Data from annual reports submitted to the Council since 2019 shows that the Priority Hire Program has been successful in creating more jobs for local construction workers, diversifying the construction workforce, and creating family wage jobs and careers that uplift economically distressed communities. In the five-year period from 2020 through 2024, the Priority Hire Program has resulted in \$35 million in wages paid to local construction workers.

The Finance and Business Operations Division (FBOD) of the Department of Executive Services recommends updating the criteria because it will enable hiring more local construction workers and put more labor dollars into economically distressed communities. The proposed criteria will also promote regional uniformity with the City of Seattle's program, making it easier for union dispatchers and contractors to implement priority hiring placements for construction projects.

King County Code 12.18A sets forth the requirements of the Priority Hire Program and requires the Council to approve any change in the criteria used to determine economically distressed. Specifically, KCC 12.18.1.030 states that "Any changes proposed by the manager

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for the criteria for determining economically distressed areas are subject to approval by Ordinance.”

Thank you for your consideration of the proposed Ordinance. If your staff have questions, please contact Ken Guy, Director of the Finance and Business Operations Division, at 206-263-9254.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shannon Braddock".

for

Shannon Braddock
King County Executive

Enclosures

cc: King County Councilmembers

ATTN: Stephanie Cirkovich, Chief of Staff, King County Council
Melani Hay, Clerk of the Council

Karan Gill, Deputy Executive, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive

Penny Lipsou, Council Relations Director, Office of the Executive

Lorraine Patterson-Harris, Chief Administrative Officer, Department of Executive Services
(DES)

Ken Guy, Director, Finance and Business Operations Division (FBOD), DES

Danielle Hinz, Deputy Director, FBOD, DES

Sandy Hanks, Contract Compliance Manager, FBOD, DES