

**MOTION BY SUPERVISORS MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
AND MICHAEL D. ANTONOVICH**

**NOVEMBER 24, 2015**

**Los Angeles County Local Worker Hire Program for Veterans**

On April 8, 2014, the Los Angeles County (County) Board of Supervisors (Board) adopted a motion to establish a local worker hire program (LWHP) for veterans. The Board found that a LWHP for veterans serves a legitimate governmental purpose as well as a public policy goal of the County aimed at enhancing opportunities for local County residents who served in the United States military or its reserve forces to be hired as construction workers on County construction projects.

The purpose of the LWHP is to help break down the barriers that veterans have historically encountered when reentering the work force after serving their country. A 2014 report from the USC School of Social Work found that eight (8) in 10 service members leave the military without a job and at least 40% leave without having identified permanent housing. The 2015 report from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs found that veterans, after adjusting for demographic differences, have an unemployment rate that is 8% higher than the rate for non-veterans, and that more than 50% of veterans experience unemployment upon separation from service. The difficulty that veterans encounter when reentering the civilian work force is further demonstrated by the number of veterans that are homeless in Los Angeles County – more than 4,300.

The LWHP for veterans that the Board is considering today is a good first step for assisting veterans with finding gainful employment, but it does not go far enough. The County must do more to ensure that contractors take seriously the County’s desire that

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RIDLEY-THOMAS \_\_\_\_\_

KUEHL \_\_\_\_\_

KNABE \_\_\_\_\_

ANTONOVICH \_\_\_\_\_

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veterans are afforded the opportunity for employment on large County construction projects. For example, mandatory programs were found to perform more effectively to achieve a 5% improvement over programs with a good faith effort standard by a 2014 analysis conducted by Paul Ong, PhD and professor at the UCLA Luskin School of Public Affairs. Veterans should also be afforded employment opportunities on smaller construction projects, which account for a significant portion of the County's annual investment in upgrading its infrastructure and facilities.

**WE THEREFORE MOVE THAT THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:**

1. Direct the Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Departments of Military and Veterans Affairs, Public Works and County Counsel, to report back in writing in 30 days to the Board on a plan for a mandatory Local Worker Hire Program for Veterans for construction projects that have a contract value of at least \$2.5 million that includes requirements comparable to the other successfully County-implemented local worker hire programs;
2. Amend the proposed policy to require contractors to demonstrate a good faith effort to hire qualified veterans who reside in the County of Los Angeles to complete a minimum of 5% of the California construction hours worked for projects with a contract value of less than \$2.5 million and for all job order contracts (JOC), except for those projects that are funded from a source that restricts such programs; and
3. Direct the Chief Executive Officer to work with the affected departments to apply the policy included in Agenda Item 19 in today's Agenda, as amended by Action #2 of this motion, to those applicable contracts which have not advertised for bids up to 60 days following adoption of this policy, and to report back in one year on the effectiveness of the policy.

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