

HB 4451 - Rep. Bhojani

Apprenticeships in Emerging & High-Demand Industries

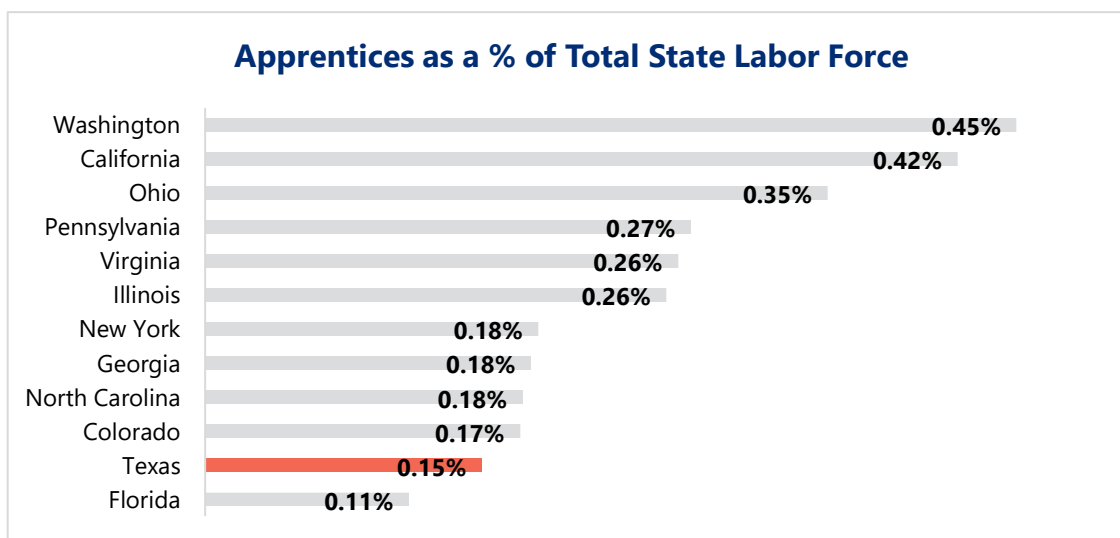


KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Texas is second-to-last among its peer states in the number of active apprentices as a percentage of the total state labor force, lagging the top two states by about three times.
- Texas employers are actively looking for qualified talent to fill their open jobs at a time when education and workforce training after high school is becoming increasingly important to get a good-paying job.
- The state can benefit from recommendations that leverage both apprenticeship program data and labor market data to ensure that there is growth in the availability of apprenticeship programs in emerging and high-demand industries.

Background

Apprenticeships offer students a model of learning that incorporates workplace exposure and skills-intensive instruction. Despite multiple legislative efforts to increase the availability of apprenticeships in Texas, Texas lags in offering these programs. According to data from the Department of Labor, Texas is second-to-last among its peer states in the number of active apprentices as a percentage of the total state labor force, with Washington and California surpassing Texas by about three times.



At the same time, Texas continues to break jobs records, and employers are actively looking for qualified talent to fill their open jobs. With more than 70% of Texas jobs requiring some postsecondary education or training by 2036, apprenticeships have a dual positive impact in providing Texans with an opportunity to learn skills important to employers while employers can fill open jobs with apprentices. Texas should continue exploring opportunities to expand the availability of apprenticeship programs in the state.

Proposed Action

House Bill 4451 by Rep. Bhojani requires the Texas Workforce Commission to work with each of the state's 28 local workforce development boards in creating an annual legislative report to expand the availability of apprenticeship programs in emerging and high-demand Texas industries. This annual report will include data on:

- total numbers of active Texas apprenticeship programs categorized by industry;
- total numbers of active Texas apprentices categorized by industry; and
- occupational demand for each Texas industry.

Together, these data points will allow the state to assess which of its industries with the highest growth and demand can benefit from greater availability of apprenticeship programs.

Public Policy Impact

An annual report focused on meeting the workforce needs of emerging and high-demand industries through apprenticeships will ensure that Texas programs are responsive to evolving labor market demands. Leveraging both programmatic data and labor market data will help with crafting strong, data-driven recommendations on how to expand apprenticeship programs in the industries where there are substantial available jobs.