

U.S. CONGRESSMAN JARED POLIS (D-CO)

2nd District, Colorado | 501 Cannon HOB, Washington, D.C. 20515 | (202) 225-2161

THE WOMEN & WORKFORCE INVESTMENT FOR NON-TRADITIONAL (WOMEN WIN) JOBS ACT

Women represent half of our nation's workforce yet are too often relegated to the lowest compensated sectors of paid work. More than half of all working women are employed in 25 of 504 occupational categories, most of which are among the lowest paid, except for teaching and nursing. Fields that employ the fewest women—known as “non-traditional” jobs—actually pay 20 to 30 percent more than predominantly female fields. For example, women make up 73.7 percent of cashiers, whose hourly wage averages \$9.52, but only 1.5 percent of electricians, who make an average of \$24.91 per hour.

At the same time, employers in several industries are facing severe shortages of skilled workers to fill the fastest-growing and highest-paying jobs of the future—from information technology and the building trades—to renewable energy and energy efficiency. For example, 90 percent of manufacturers are experiencing a shortage of qualified employees including machinists, operators, craft workers, distributors, and technicians. Women hold only 4.7 percent of welding, soldering, and brazing jobs.

For the sake of equity and the economy, America must expand opportunities for women in non-traditional fields. Women deserve greater opportunities and businesses require qualified workers in these higher paying fields.

To address the issue, the **Women WIN Jobs Act** would create a new federal grant program to help recruit, prepare, place and retain women in high-demand, high-wage nontraditional jobs. Specifically, the bill would:

- Authorize \$100 million for recruiting, training, placing and retaining women in occupations that lead to economic self-sufficiency through innovative partnerships in each and every state;
- Require eligible partnerships to include a community-based organization experienced in serving women, employers or a business association, a public postsecondary education institution, and a registered apprenticeship, if available;
- Give priority to partnerships that leverage other public or private funds and also targets services to low-income women;
- Require grantees to conduct public education and outreach, provide career guidance and counseling, conduct individual assessments, assist participants to access postsecondary and apprenticeship programs, coordinate with high schools to improve the transition of participants into postsecondary opportunities, provide access to support services, develop employer incentives, collect and report performance data, and establish benchmarks, among other activities;
- Establish a bipartisan National Commission on the Status of Women in High-demand, High-skill Nontraditional Occupations, charged with holding hearings and recommending additional policies to raise women's workforce participation in nontraditional occupations; and,
- Create a national clearinghouse to disseminate best practices and provide legal and technical assistance to promote the employment and retention of women in nontraditional occupations, as well as for a rigorous national evaluation.