June 13, 2019

Honorable Jerry Hill
Chair, Labor, Public Employment & Retirement Committee
California State Senate
Capitol Building, Room 5035
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1019 (Frazier) as amended April 10, 2019 – SUPPORT

Dear Senator Hill:

Disability Rights California (DRC), a non-profit advocacy organization that advances and protects the rights of Californians with disabilities, supports AB 1019. This bill is scheduled for hearing in the Senate Labor, Public Employment & Retirement Committee on June 19, 2019.

Existing law establishes the Interagency Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship (committee) within the Division of Apprenticeship Standards within the Department of Industrial Relations, and requires that committee to provide advice and guidance to the Administrator of Apprenticeship and the Chief of the Division of Apprenticeship Standards on apprenticeship programs, standards, and agreements, as well as preapprenticeship, certification, and on-the-job training and retraining programs, in nonbuilding trades industries. Existing law requires the membership of the committee to be composed of specified ex officio members of various departments and six persons appointed by the Secretary of Labor and Workforce Development who are familiar with specified apprenticeable occupations that meet specified requirements. Existing law authorizes the committee to create subcommittees as needed to address specific industry sectors or projects.
This bill would add to the ex officio members of the committee the Director of Rehabilitation and the executive director of the State Council on Developmental Disabilities. The bill would require the committee to create a subcommittee to address apprenticeship for the disabled community.

Existing law states that it is the intent of the Legislature that the department will encourage greater participation for women and ethnic minorities in apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs.

This bill would add that it is the intent of the Legislature that the department will encourage greater participation for the disabled in apprenticeship and preapprenticeship programs.

Employment for people with disabilities is necessary. Workers with disabilities still have not seen pre-recession employment levels. The labor force participation rate for these workers fell from 39.3% in 2009 to 34.5% in 2015, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. In California, only 33.8% of people with disabilities are employed. People with disabilities deserve as many opportunities as they can to have gainful employment.

Ensuring that there is representation on the Interagency Advisory Committee on Apprenticeship from the state agencies that work with and provide services to people with disabilities in employment will enhance opportunities to advocate for the creation or tailoring of apprenticeship programs for persons with disabilities. These new opportunities will provide additional and much needed avenues for people with disabilities to obtain careers that are integrated in the community, and pay competitive wages.

For these reasons, DRC supports this bill. Please contact me if you have any questions about our position or if I can provide any further information.

Sincerely,

Eric Harris
Legislative Advocate 2
Disability Rights California
cc: Honorable Members, Senate Labor, Public Employment & Retirement Committee
Gideon Baum, Consultant, Senate Labor, Public Employment & Retirement Committee
Megan Lane, Principal Consultant, Assembly Labor & Employment Committee
Honorable Jim Frazier, California State Assembly
Charles Dulac, Legislative Aide, Office of Assembly Member Frazier
Scott Seekatz, Policy Consultant, Senate Republican Caucus Committee