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**AB-338 Workforce development: the Counties of Los Angeles and Ventura: 2025 wildfires.** (2025-2026)

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**Assembly Bill No. 338**

**CHAPTER 532**

An act to add Section 14017.2 to the Unemployment Insurance Code, relating to workforce development, and declaring the urgency thereof, to take effect immediately.

[ Approved by Governor October 10, 2025. Filed with Secretary of State October 10, 2025. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 338, Solache. Workforce development: the Counties of Los Angeles and Ventura: 2025 wildfires.

Existing law, the California Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, establishes the California Workforce Development Board as the body responsible for assisting the Governor in the development, oversight, and continuous improvement of California's workforce investment system and the alignment of education and workforce investment systems to the needs of the 21st century economy and workforce. The Budget Act of 2025 appropriated \$5,000,000 to the board to support workforce development in areas of the Counties of Los Angeles and Ventura impacted by wildfires.

This bill would require the board to allocate the funds from that appropriation to the Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity for, among other things, workforce development strategies, such as education or supportive services, including stipends for underemployed and unemployed low- to moderate-income individuals to ensure a skilled and sufficient workforce for the scale of rebuilding and recovery of areas in the Counties of Los Angeles and Ventura impacted by the 2025 wildfires and to support underemployed and unemployed low- to moderate-income workers affected by the fires. The bill would require the Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity to reallocate \$600,000 to the Economic Development Collaborative for those purposes. The bill would require the board to allow the Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity to subcontract with other entities to fulfill the provisions and intent of the bill and would require the board to require quality standards and practices, as specified. The bill would require the Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity to focus on employment in jobs in certain professions and industries, including construction, firefighting, and health care, or other areas essential to emergency response, disaster relief, recovery, rebuilding, and regional economic development and resilience. The bill would require individuals participating in programs funded by the bill to have access to expedited licensing and certification, if feasible.

This bill would declare that it is to take effect immediately as an urgency statute.

This bill would make legislative findings and declarations as to the necessity of a special statute for the Counties of Los Angeles and Ventura.

Vote: 2/3 Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: yes Local Program: no

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.** Section 14017.2 is added to the Unemployment Insurance Code, to read:

**14017.2.** (a) The California Workforce Development Board shall allocate the funds appropriated to the board pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (b) of Section 19.56 of the Budget Act of 2025, as amended by Assembly Bill 102 of the 2025–26 Regular Session, to the Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity for workforce development strategies, such as education, high-road training partnerships, and other job training programs, preapprenticeships, transitional jobs, or supportive services, including stipends, for underemployed and unemployed low- to moderate-income individuals to ensure a skilled and sufficient workforce for the scale of rebuilding and recovery of areas in the Counties of Los Angeles and Ventura impacted by the 2025 wildfires and to support underemployed and unemployed low- to moderate-income workers affected by the fires. This also includes rapid response and layoff aversion, recruitment services, financial incentives, and customized training opportunities for businesses impacted by the fires and those hiring impacted workers as part of the rebuild and recovery. The funds are also for new or expanded job and business centers and operations near the fire zones to ensure close proximity of programs and services for dislocated and impacted workers and businesses.

(b) The Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity shall reallocate six hundred thousand dollars (\$600,000) to the Economic Development Collaborative to be used for the purposes specified in this section.

(c) Notwithstanding subdivision (a), the California Workforce Development Board may use up to 5 percent of the total allocation for state administration.

(d) The California Workforce Development Board shall allow the Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity to subcontract with other entities to fulfill the provisions and intent of subdivision (a).

(e) The California Workforce Development Board shall require quality standards and practices, as defined in subdivisions (s) and (t) of Section 14005.

(f) In developing and implementing workforce development strategies funded pursuant to this section, the Los Angeles County Department of Economic Opportunity shall focus on employment in public and private sector jobs in construction, utilities, firefighting, health care, social services, education, childcare, housing, and shelter assistance, or other areas essential to emergency response, disaster relief, recovery, rebuilding, and regional economic development and resilience.

(g) To ensure there is a direct pipeline into the workforce, individuals participating in workforce programs funded pursuant to this section shall have access to expedited licensing and certification, if feasible.

**SEC. 2.** This act is an urgency statute necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety within the meaning of Article IV of the California Constitution and shall go into immediate effect. The facts constituting the necessity are:

To ensure that the State of California is able to meet the immediate need to coordinate and mobilize workforce to rebuild communities and support workers whose lives and incomes are affected in the Counties of Los Angeles and Ventura impacted by the 2025 wildfires, it is necessary that this act take effect immediately.

**SEC. 3.** The Legislature finds and declares that a special statute is necessary and that a general statute cannot be made applicable within the meaning of Section 16 of Article IV of the California Constitution because of the unique circumstances facing the Counties of Los Angeles and Ventura due to extreme wildfires beginning in January 2025 that have resulted in the urgent need to support affected workers and for a skilled workforce to support the rebuilding, recovery, and economic development and resilience of areas in those counties impacted by the wildfires.