



June 2, 2025

Assembly Member Papan
1021 O Street, Room 4220
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 527 (Papan) – Oppose Unless Amended (As Amended 5/05/2025)

Dear Assembly Member Papan:

Associated Builders and Contractors of California (ABC CA) is a statewide organization representing working Californians in carpentry, construction, construction craft laborer, electrical, low voltage, painting, plumbing, pipefitting, and sheet metal who are building commercial, industrial and affordable housing projects, and we write to express our oppose unless amended position on AB 527 (Papan), a bill that establishes an exemption from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for geothermal exploratory projects, if a county is the lead agency.

This bill has an admirable goal of increasing the state's use of renewable energy by planning for and increasing the state's use of geothermal power. However, statewide policies related to the creation and expansion of "green" jobs and resources also necessitates the expansion of "green skills" in the workforce. Many men and women in the oil and gas industry have the necessary experience that can serve them well in a **safe** transition to geothermal jobs. However, AB 527 prioritizes "skilled and trained" workers when there is a large group of men and women that could safely do this work but do not have that classification.

While there might be a need for a skilled and trained workforce for some of the new opportunities generated by the expansion of geothermal jobs in the state, there is a **whole generation of workers that will be left behind** because even though they have the expertise and the safety statistics to back them as a qualified workforce, they are not considered "skilled and trained" in the state of California. Governor Newsom's Master Plan for Career Education and his "career passports" sees the value of life and work experience regardless of a formal and traditional degree, we would encourage you to do the same.

ABC CA requests that AB 527 be more inclusive in its language and intent and open the discussion on workforce to include men and women who already have the necessary skill set to step into this emerging industry and be given the same opportunity as everyone else.

ABC CA would love to sit down with you to discuss our proposed amendments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Gutierrez", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Greg Gutierrez

Chair of the Board