

In AI era, skilled trades workers in high demand



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Need for laborers exists across nation, but varies

Rachel Barber and Jessica Guynn
USA TODAY

White-collar workers in AI-exposed fields are looking at the skilled trades and asking themselves whether they made the right career choice.

New research suggests it may be reasonable for them to wonder. Americans fear AI could lead to job losses, so they're looking to fields they think are more secure.

Demand for workers in the skilled trades remains substantial and the pipeline of new entrants is not keeping pace as older workers retire, according to a new national report from the Alliance for America's Skilled Trades.

If that demand is not met, Ford CEO Jim Farley said Americans may start to notice the worker shortage. It'll start small. A local highway may take longer and cost more to build. An auto technician shortage could mean

drivers face longer wait times when getting their car repaired.

But when a plumber or electrician is needed at a water-treatment plant, or to keep an ambulance running in an emergency, their absence could have "life or death" consequences, he said.

Farley is one of several industry leaders trying to "break this myth" that attending college to prepare for a corporate 9-to-5 is superior to a career in the skilled trades. Hands-on work "awakens something that's kind of pretty self-evident that we've lost as a society," Farley said in an interview with USA TODAY.

After Farley's teenage son Jameson told his dad he didn't see a need to go to college, the pair landed on a solution: Jameson would learn to weld in the summer and go to college. On the weekends, he's working as a

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PROPOSITION 40

Poll: Tax for billionaires faces growing opposition

Daniella Segura
USA TODAY NETWORK

Sentiment toward California's billionaire tax initiative has shifted, with more voters now opposing the measure than supporting it, a new poll shows.

Proposition 40, a closely watched ballot measure that would impose a one-time 5% tax on residents whose worth tops \$1 billion, is opposed by 52% of likely voters and supported by 46%, according to a Public Policy Institute of California Poll released Oct. 28.

The poll marks a significant shift from a PPIC survey released a month earlier, which found the measure held a slim majority, with 52% support and 46% opposition. The measure would primarily fund health care.

The PPIC poll also differs from other recent surveys, which found voters largely split on Proposition 40. A Citrin-POLITICO poll released Oct. 19 found 46% of likely voters favor the measure, while 43% oppose it. An Independent Voter Project survey released Oct. 5 similarly found voters divided, with 40% in favor and 38% opposed. A UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies poll released Sept. 25 found comparable results, with 45% support and 42% opposition among likely voters.

In the most recent PPIC poll, six in 10 Democrats said they would vote for the measure, compared with four in 10 independents and two in 10 Republicans. Younger voters (70% of those ages 18 to 34), those earning less than \$40,000 a year (64%), Latinos (58%) and Los Angeles residents (53%) were among the groups most likely to support the proposition.

In addition to Proposition 40, the statewide survey asked voters about the other 13 ballot measures and the governor's race.

Here's what Californians should know about the poll, which surveyed a sample of 1,728 California adult residents and included 1,086 likely voters between October 16 and October 22.

The survey also examined two wealth tax countermeasures on November's ballot meant to mitigate the effects of Proposition 40 if it passes.

Proposition 41 would prohibit new state taxes that exclude revenue from the state spending limit, while Proposition 42 would prohibit new personal property taxes and certain retroactive state taxes passed after January 2026.

Voters are split on Proposition 41 (48% in favor and 49% opposed),

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Fall back

Daylight saving time ends at 2 a.m. Sunday. Remember to set your clocks back one hour.



NFL rankings reset

SPORTS, 1B

Christa Pike recovering after failed execution

Molly Davis
Nashville Tennessean
USA TODAY NETWORK - TENNESSEE

NASHVILLE – Christa Pike said she is in constant physical and mental pain in a statement released Oct. 30, one month after she survived an execution attempt by the state of Tennessee.

"I had not contemplated life beyond that night, and I'm deeply hurt by the incompetence that has put so many people in this terrible position," she said in a statement. "I continue to think about my victim's family and the terrible pain and loss they have endured."

Pike was sentenced to death for the 1985 murder of 19-year-old Colleen Slemmer. Her execution was scheduled for 10 a.m. Sept. 30 at Riverbend Maximum Security Prison in Nashville, but a last-minute legal battle delayed the proceedings until the evening. She survived two rounds of lethal injection

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Celtic Woman

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