

Chair Riley, Vice-Chair Hansell and Members of the Committee,

My name is Christopher Tyson. I am a Service Worker for Trimet since 2018. I have maintained Light Rail Vehicles and Buses, and the work I perform benefits the residents of Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas Counties. My duties include general sanitation, critical vehicle system inspections, and COVID Prevention.

Through every dangerous winter storm, every wildfire, every Civil Disturbance, me and my 200 fellow Service Workers are Trimet's first responders to all factors that could affect the safety and quality of the system that our Riders and our region depend on.

For decades, the Apprenticeship program was the next step after Service Working. It was an entry into a career for which the return-on-investment compounds exponentially for the community, the economy, and the environment.

I have aspirations to develop professionally with Trimet. To grow with the system, as it grows. To follow the example of my Seniors who began their careers as I have, but with the path to become the professionals Trimet is built upon.

Without the Apprenticeship Program, I have no path. No way to develop. There is no place for Service Workers to continue with the company. As an organization, we have lost talented people directly to this lack of hope. They describe the dilemma they face when faced with this Dead-End situation. We ask: How could we serve to our utmost with the loss of a proven development program? One that has had been a keystone to Trimet's operational success for 40 of Trimet's 52 years?

The elimination of the Apprenticeship Program is a misuse of skilled and experienced Service Workers. In Trimet's position, where so many of our citizens' safety and livelihoods rely on expertise and dedication, it is a clear step backwards not to utilize and develop the unique human resource already committed to serving the transit needs of the district.

We've been asking for the re-instatement of an Apprenticeship program, so we can continue to provide the service our communities deserve and that people like me can build a long-time career at TriMet. Now we're asking you to help make sure the apprenticeship programs are part of collective bargaining by passing SB 670.