



A STRONG VOICE FOR OREGON'S WORKERS

TO: Chair Nathanson
Vice-Chairs Reschke and Pham
Members of the House Revenue committee

FR: Catie Theisen, Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: Strong Labor Standards in HB 2021A

May 13, 2021

The Oregon AFL-CIO is the statewide federation of labor unions representing over 300,000 workers in every corner of the state and in just about every industry.

With a diverse membership made up of construction workers and environmental regulators, linemen and pulp and paper workers, nurses and manufacturing workers, education employees and public transit workers, thoughtful engagement on these types of policies and proposals is always vital. Oregon's workers recognize that climate change is having devastating impacts on our communities and our economy, so it is imperative that workers are at the table alongside diverse stakeholders to ensure that as our state moves towards our climate and energy goals, working Oregonians are not left behind in any transition.

This is why for many years and on various climate and clean energy policy proposals, the Oregon AFL-CIO has consistently advocated for provisions that will ensure that a clean energy economy and future is one that also creates and promotes family-supporting jobs and protects workers in impacted industries.

HB 2021A as-is represents common ground between labor and industry on high-road labor standards including an apprenticeship standard; goals for hiring and recruiting veterans, women and people of color; wage standards; and health and retirement benefits to the employees providing labor on the project. These baseline provisions will set Oregon on a path to ensure clean energy jobs are good quality jobs while also putting us in parity with other states who have passed or are in process of passing their own 100% standard. We greatly appreciate the work of numerous legislators and stakeholders to ensure the inclusion of responsible contractor language that advances these key workforce standards.

We know that Oregon's communities and economy can only thrive when there are policies in place to ensure comprehensive training, robust input from Oregonians most impacted, and jobs that are safe and provide good benefits. It's critical that the labor standards in HB 2021A remain in any version of the bill that moves forward, and we encourage the legislature to continue to have a keen eye towards robust and comprehensive standards that promote skill building, good wages and benefits, and pathways towards retirement for Oregon workers.