



OREGON WORKFORCE
PARTNERSHIP

SB623

COVID RECOVERY & WORKFORCE MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2021 *A Blueprint to Support Equitable Workforce Development and Economic Recovery*

PANDEMIC FALLOUT

- 143,000+ unemployed
- 300% increase in long-term unemployed
- 20% increase in food stamp usage
- 70,000 to lose benefits on 12/26
- 1 in 3 struggle w/housing

The COVID pandemic has resulted in the steepest economic downturn since the Great Depression. The onset of the pandemic caused unemployment claims to reach nearly 400,000 and experts predict Oregon will not return to pre-pandemic job levels until 2025. While the full impact of the pandemic has yet to unfold, Oregonians **most impacted** by the economic downturn are **Communities of Color, women, younger, less educated and lower-income workers**.

The COVID crisis has also revealed **serious flaws** in the systems intended to serve and support Oregonians during difficult times. Tens of thousands of Oregonians are still waiting for unemployment insurance checks. Thousands more are likely to lose support in early-2021. Tens of thousands are behind on rent, struggling to put food on the table, and running out of options.

To return from the COVID-19 crisis as a stronger State, we must strengthen our commitment to those Oregonians most impacted by the COVID crisis. We can't go back to the way things were. **The inequities highlighted by the crisis cannot be allowed to continue.** This will require a fundamental redesign of the systems that make up the state's response to changes in the labor force and economy. Without question, this redesign must put racial equity and front-line workers at the center. The redesign must also put decision making and solution building as close to the community as possible - allowing local communities to respond to local economic circumstances, priorities and needs.



RECOVERY FROM A CRISIS OF THIS MAGNITUDE CALLS FOR IMMEDIATE ACTION AND LONGER-TERM VISION. THE COVID RECOVERY & WORKFORCE MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2021 DOES BOTH:

- ▶ Directs Local Workforce Boards to convene regional partners to align and (re)focus existing resources to address immediate community workforce needs within **45 days**.
- ▶ Organizes federal and state resources to most **efficiently and effectively** respond to regional circumstances, partnerships and investments.
- ▶ Promotes ongoing engagement and leadership of local community-based organizations and **communities most impacted by the economic downturn** in the design and delivery of regional programs and services.
- ▶ Mandates objective, sustained program and system **oversight** to ensure appropriate use, management, responsiveness and effectiveness of available workforce resources and services.
- ▶ Establishes **transparency** in available state and regional resources and builds clear connections between state and local investments, goals and objectives.

- ☑ ACTION
- ☑ EQUITY
- ☑ ACCOUNTABILITY
- ☑ SUSTAINABILITY

TO CO-SPONSOR: E-mail Senator Lew Frederick: Sen.LewFrederick@oregonlegislature.gov

FOR QUESTIONS: Contact Doug Riggs at 503-702-5120 or Iris Maria Chavez at 504-701-3931

