

Senator Chuck Riley  
Senator Bill Hansell  
Senate Committee On Labor and Business  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

February 25, 2021

Re: Senate Bill 17 Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region Occupational Licensing

Dear Senators Riley and Hansell –

I am writing this letter in support of SB 17 sponsored by Senator Lynn Findley.

The Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region (EOBED) is a unique workforce area, bordering Idaho, generating significant labor force from that state, and facing differential state licensing regulations that have the potential to stymie sustainable growth.

The proposed bill would allow out-of-state applicants seeking occupational licensing in Oregon more time to meet Oregon standards if the applicant is already licensed in another state and is seeking to work in the EOBED Region.

Providing Oregon professional licensing boards with the ability to issue provisional licenses or authorizations to qualified out-of-state applicants would be a fabulous step toward closing the gap in this labor force for the region. The two-year window of time proposed to allow applicants to fully meet Oregon standards while performing work in the EOBED Region during that time, is achievable and a good strategy for growth.

The EOBED region suffers from a lack of licensed professionals and businesses in key occupational trades necessary for growth and development of this region. Construction contractors, electricians, plumbers, and HVAC are in high demand. Current Oregon licensed businesses struggle to fulfill the market needs for occupational work; thus, affecting timely growth of the region. Apprenticeship rules are more restrictive in Oregon than Idaho. Ratio of journeymen to apprenticeships thwarts business growth and stall workforce growth in Oregon for these professions.

It is common for Idaho licensed businesses to want to expand geographic scope and do business legally in Oregon. The occupation trade licensing become a stumbling block in terms of time to complete the reciprocity requirements and in taking the licensing examination.

Additional time provided to the occupational trades people to become licensed in Oregon and to be able to do business in the EOBED region would be instrumental to stimulate much needed growth in the region.

In reading your biographies Senators Riley and Hansell, I am confident that your collective experiences in the military, as small business owners, in understanding what is is like to cut through red tape to make



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businesses succeed, and in your understanding of the unique issues that face Eastern Oregon; that you will fully support SB 17 and be a part of the growth of Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region.

Thank you for your time and review of this bill. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you require additional information.

Sincerely

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