February 03, 2022

Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Policy Position
SB 1545 – Related to Workforce Development

Clackamas County supports a Future Ready Oregon

Clackamas County has been providing workforce services for over 40 years, ensuring high quality and effective programming for low-income and marginalized residents. Our agency prioritizes serving individuals experiencing barriers to employment and include priority populations such as youth, survivors of domestic violence, long-term unemployed, individuals living with disabilities, individuals experiencing mental health conditions, and those with substance use disorder.

More recently, the critical need for the county's services has become even clearer as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. For 18 months during the pandemic, the County was the only provider of in-person employment services. Staff provided 562 in-person appointments for residents who could not be served remotely. The clients the County serves are often those with extensive barriers to sustainable employment and often require intensive, sustained, and person-centered services to be successful. This work is a critical safety net that ensures residents do not fall through the system.

We believe the intent of SB 1545 is to expand the current workforce system, building upon what is working. In a small number of counties – including both Clackamas and Lane – county governments are playing a critical role in local workforce systems. The two proposed amendments below would ensure they are not inadvertently left out, while also ensuring other existing workforce service providers and community based organizations are able work together for all Oregonians.

- Add "government entities" to the definition of "Workforce service provider" (Sec. 13b).
- In every instance in which all workforce service providers are intended, replace "community-based organization" with "workforce service provider."

We urge a "YES" vote on SB 1545.

Please contact Chris Lyons at clyons@clackamas.us for more information.