



A STRONG VOICE FOR OREGON'S WORKERS

TO: Chair Taylor
Vice-Chair Knopp
Members of the Senate Labor and Business committee

FR: Catie Theisen, OR AFL-CIO

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 4059

February 17, 2022

The Oregon AFL-CIO represents 300,000 workers across the state and is proud to be a voice for all workers in the legislative process. As such, we've long advocated for policies to ensure that a clean energy economy is one that also creates and promotes family-supporting jobs and protects workers in impacted industries. And that's because we know that Oregon's communities and economy can only truly thrive when there are policies in place to ensure comprehensive training and jobs that are safe and provide good benefits.

We support HB 4059, which clarifies workforce standards, ensures all parties understand their responsibilities at each stage of development, and expands the number of projects requiring apprenticeship utilization further realizing HB 2021's intent to create career opportunities for disproportionately underrepresented communities such as women, veterans, people of color, and people with disabilities.

The role of apprenticeship and prevailing wages in the construction industry has been transformative in the lives of so many workers. Oregon community members who have never worked in construction can enroll in a free apprenticeship program, receive high-quality training from certified instructors, learn construction fundamentals and safety and health processes, and be placed on actual projects where they continue to learn critical skills while earning a decent wage, and benefits.

And by paying prevailing wages that reflect established regional construction industry standards for pay and benefits, the passage of HB 4059 will help make sure that there will be highly trained Oregonians employed to support the continued growth of this sector going forward.

As a state we need to live our values: we can achieve 100% clean energy while also promoting, creating, and diversifyin family wage, quality jobs that Oregonians can be proud of. HB 4059 is a product of dedicated collaboration between stakeholders – we urge your YES vote.