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Subject: SB 850

Chair Taylor, Vice Chair Bonham, and Members of the Committee:

Knife River Corporation is one of Oregon's largest heavy civil and highway contractors. Knife River is two companies: an open-shop paving, aggregates, ready-mix concrete, and prestress concrete company of approximately 1,200 employees and our Southern Oregon union affiliate with approximately 400 employees. Knife River opposes SB 850 and respectfully urges a "no" vote.

Oregon suffers from a critical shortage of skilled construction labor. Even as a BOLI-certified training agent that has made a generational investment in our state-of-the-art training center outside of Albany, Knife River struggles to recruit enough qualified applicants to meet apprenticeship, OJT, and DBE requirements on public works projects. Oregon's construction workforce is insufficient to deliver on the substantial state and federal infrastructure commitments that are in the funding pipeline. Oregon's unions are unable to provide enough skilled labor to meet the needs of Oregon's contractors. SB 850 will do nothing to change this. Instead, the PLA requirements of SB 850 would decrease the pool of subcontractors that can participate in public works projects, force open-shop companies to pay into struggling union health and welfare benefit plans, and shrink, not grow, Oregon's construction workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.