



February 27, 2023

**TO:** Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Business

**FR:** Katie Koenig, Oregon Business & Industry

**RE:** Oregon Business and Industry's Support of SB 849

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

Oregon Business & Industry is a statewide association representing businesses from a wide variety of industries and from each of Oregon's 36 counties. Our 1,600 member companies, more than 80% of which are small businesses, employ more than 250,000 Oregonians.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 849. While we are still reviewing components of the bill, we are very supportive of the intent. Oregon is in the midst of a workforce shortage while seeing an increased demand for culturally competent employees, particularly in health care and educational settings.

We have many talented and internationally credentialed immigrants and refugees unable to maximize their skills and training due to the cumbersome and complicated path to licensure. SB 849 will help address some of Oregon's critical workforce needs by addressing barriers internationally educated professionals are facing while trying to obtain licensure. Internationally educated Oregon residents stand ready to enter into critical professions and address some of our most urgent workforce needs.

We urge your support of SB 849 and will continue to analyze the details of how various elements will be implemented.

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