

Submitter: Larry Williams

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Transportation and Economic Development

Measure: SB5515

Esteemed members of the committee,

While I have been an employee of the agency for 26 years, my comments here are my own. I urge your support of the budget request as a whole, which I think provides a prudent and reasoned approach forward. I will focus, however, on the apprenticeship and training division.

At the outset of the Future Ready Oregon process, we told an audience assembled on workforce issues in the Oregon Convention Center that we appreciated the confidence and looked forward to making state leaders proud of their investment. I think you should be. The new grants team for apprenticeship has stood up a process and done an incredible job of establishing grants approved by our state council to expand apprenticeship in manufacturing and health care and to broaden the reach of construction pre-apprenticeship throughout the state. Keeping a core of the grants team together to continue this work is a great down payment on BOLI's critical contributions to the workforce development space. If such investments were continuous, we could achieve more sustainable results such as what BOLI has been able to accomplish in managing the ODOT workforce program. For a feature highlighting the childcare subsidies in the ODOT program, see this article: <https://earlylearningnation.com/2023/01/how-child-care-in-oregon-is-saving-the-construction-trade/>

I also want to commend the proposal to make permanent the positions for veterans' outreach and for Eastern Oregon. These are both unique positions that could be seen as models for how to do outreach, recruitment, guidance and support for priority populations (in the case of the veterans position) and how to reach various regions of the state with services that blend support for employers and the apprenticeship system of workforce development (the Eastern Oregon position).

Thank you for this opportunity to share my insights.