



Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.

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March 16, 2023

The Honorable John Lively, Chair
House Committee on Higher Education
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: HB 3563 – **Support with Amendments**

Chair Lively, Co-Vice Chairs McIntire and Ruiz and Committee Members:

Associated Oregon Loggers (AOL) is Oregon's state forest operator trade association which represents nearly 1000 small forest contracting businesses. Our members have been involved in the management of Oregon's forests for generations and provide their local communities with economic stability, Oregon with healthy and vigorously growing forests and the nation with renewable building materials. Thank you for the opportunity to share with you the voice of nearly 22,000 hard working Oregonians who need support from the state to address workforce challenges in our sector.

Although AOL supports the overall concept of HB 3563, we believe a few amendments would significantly improve the bill and the outcomes sought by the Oregon Youth Corps, Oregon Community Stewardship Corps, Oregon Conservation Corps and the Oregon Youth Employment Program.

Our association is serious about workforce development and helping our small business members grow a sustainable workforce to address our climate, housing and wildfire crises. We have created a Workforce Development Program and have a dedicated full-time manager of the program.

AOL was the only industry partner that fully engaged in development and final crafting of the landscape resiliency and workforce development sections of SB 762 (2021) and saw great opportunity to engage with Oregon Department of Forestry and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to expand work opportunities for rural small businesses to help address our wildfire crisis. The Department of Forestry has fully integrated our professional voice into their committees, work groups and programs, but we have failed to get this same type of engagement from the HECC.

We support the effort of HB 3563 to consolidate the advisory and oversight roles of disparate committees on the suite of youth corps and employment programs the HECC manages, but past legislation has given all authority to the Governor to appoint these positions without any sideboards on expertise, experience and knowledge of the trades industries the programs seek to develop a workforce for.

Our primary suggestion to improve the bill is simple, we would like the bill to ensure members on the new Advisory Board have experience with career connected learning, career pathway development, youth education programs or workforce development programs AND understand the workforce needs of one or more industries with program representation within the programs it would oversee.

We also would like to see some specific types of industries and interests represented on the Board. We suggest:


- (a) At least two member representing forestry or wildfire trades,
- (b) At least one member representing the building or construction trades,
- (c) At least one member representing the utilities trades,
- (c) At least one member representing mechanic or auto trades,
- (d) At least one member engaged in natural resources education, and
- (e) At least one member representing local governments with high risk of exposure to their wildland urban interface.

There may be other interests that should be included, but we believe including at least these descriptors would ensure individuals on the Advisory Board are engaged enough to see the full picture of how the youth corps and employment programs at the HECC fit in with other workforce development activities in the sectors represented in the programs and create better outcomes for them.

Additionally, we would like the bill to add clarity around non-profit trade associations engaged in workforce development as eligible entities for grant funds to support efforts in workforce development and allow money in the Oregon Conservation Corps Fund to be used for projects that either reduce fuels in the short or mid-term through on-the-ground projects or workforce development opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on our views of HB 3563 and I am available for any questions you may have.

Graciously,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amanda Sullivan-Astor', written over a horizontal line.

Amanda Sullivan-Astor (she/her/hers)
AOL, Forest Policy Manager
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