



Residential Construction Workforce Development

June 4, 2025 Information Session
Oregon Senate Committee on Housing and Development

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Introduction

- I am honored to represent a collection of perspectives from Central Oregon:
 - Market-rate and middle-housing residential builders
 - Public high school Construction Career and Technical Education (CTE) educators
 - Affordable housing providers
 - Regional Workforce Development Board
- **Our takeaway message: in order for Oregon to successfully build 36,000 new homes every year for ten years, we need sustained, statewide financial and legislative investments in our residential construction workforce.**



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The State of Our Residential Construction Workforce Today



- A residential construction workforce pipeline issue
- All construction trades (framers, electricians, plumbers, HVAC, energy efficiency, etc.) are impacted by a labor shortage
- Aging workforce, Great Recession, COVID-19 all contribute to industry-wide labor shortage
- Under-funded and under-promoted/under-valued construction CTE programs in high schools and community colleges
- According to the American Immigration Council, 14% of Oregon's construction workforce are immigrants and 7% of the industry's workforce are undocumented immigrants

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Primary Barriers to Construction Workforce Development

- Lack of access to hands-on training and on-site skill-building for students 18 and under
- Oregon's Rural and Frontier counties lack sufficient journeymen and so cannot meet the required 1:1 apprenticeship ratio nor prevailing wage grant requirements
- High school: lack of CTE programs, large class sizes, short class periods, and inability to travel to active job sites
- Inconsistent funding/program design/curriculum across the state's school districts and community colleges
- Current administration's immigration policies



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How Do We Effectively and Equitably Study Our Industry – and Then Take Action?

- Several years of legislative presentations on this topic, including May 2023 to House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
- February 2024: Governor Kotek's Housing Production Advisory Council's (HPAC) recommendations included those from the Workforce Shortages Work Group
- February 2025: Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) Oregon Housing Production Workforce Assessment
 - Gaps in the study's data collection and industry respondent outreach methods
 - Designing & funding studies to meet the population we are trying to understand and serve



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Potential Solutions

- Amend Oregon workforce labor law to allow safety-certified 16-year-olds to work on active job sites and use power tools
- **HPAC:** Consistent, sustained funding for high school, community college, and adjudicated programs
- **HPAC:** Work with DOE and HECC to adopt standard BOLI-approved curriculums statewide
- **HPAC:** Collaborating with Labor to expand licensed residential construction trade apprentice ratios to 2:1 for Rural and Frontier counties
- **HPAC:** Leverage existing state resources and workforce development infrastructure: state's 9 local Workforce Development Boards to serve as recruitment and training hubs



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THANK YOU!

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