



To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

From: Ibrahim Coulibaly

Date: February 25, 2025

RE: Support for HB 5015 BOLI Budget

Dear Co-Chairs Woods and Gomberg and members of the subcommittee,

My name is Ibrahim Coulibaly, and I am writing in support of the 2025-2027 Governor's Recommended Budget for the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI). BOLI is an important resource for workers, businesses and industries, especially now during a time of unprecedented demand for highly skilled labor and economic growth.

I am a resident of Eugene, Oregon and a constituent in House District 6 and Senate District 4. I am a union member of SEIU Local 503 and I serve in various roles, including President of the BOLI Sublocal, Chair of the Central Table Bargaining team, CAPE Council President, Chair of the Afram Caucus, and a member of Civil and Human Rights Committee.

Oregon laws protect the rights of Oregon workers, find housing, and free from discrimination. At BOLI, I *work as an Investigator with the Civil Rights Division in the Fair Housing Unit*. The division provides guidance to the public regarding state and federal civil rights law. BOLI investigators engage regularly with stakeholders from the employer and worker communities to ensure that civil rights are upheld. In the last 10 years, Civil Rights questionnaire intake forms have increased by over 278%. This major increase means that our backlog grows due to the lack of staff capacity.

I have seen first-hand what our work does for Oregon. By the end of this biennium, the Civil Rights division will receive more than 10,000 cases through our intake questionnaire. That is 10,000 calls to you, our legislators, because BOLI is your tool to help people. These are not only calls but they are stories. Oregonians will often call the line in distress, sometimes in tears, because something has gone wrong. This requires investigators to act as social workers because we are the last resort, the last opportunity to correct a wrong. The

workload is taking a toll on our team. The Civil Rights Division expects a higher caseload once the agency revamps the website and the intake system. Our unit needs additional staff to meet the demand of workers and Oregonians.

In closing, I ask Co-Chairs Woods and Gomberg and members of the committee to support HB 5015 and fully fund BOLI to ensure Oregonians have access to good paying jobs and safe working conditions.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Ibrahim Coulibaly, SEIU Local 503