



International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, Transportation Workers

NWRC of SMART, Local 16

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February 26, 2025

Re: HB 5015 – Support for a Fully Funded BOLI

Co-Chairs Woods and Gomberg, Members of the Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development,

My name is Brian Noble, and I am writing today on behalf of NWRC of SMART, Local 16, representing over 2,000 workers across Oregon. Our union stands in strong support of fully funding the Bureau of Labor and Industries.

Our members are the backbone of the sheet metal industry in Oregon, and they work hard to support their families, contribute to the economy, and build better communities. However, without a strong, fully funded agency to enforce labor protections, workers' rights (and everything they contribute) are at risk.

At Local 16, we've seen firsthand how disinvestment in BOLI has created an enforcement crisis. BOLI has fewer staff now than it did in the 1980s, despite significant growth in Oregon's workforce. This staffing shortage has led to unacceptable delays in investigating claims and allows wage theft and discriminatory practices to continue unchecked.

At the same time, uncertainty at the federal level underscores the urgency for Oregon to prioritize strong state enforcement of worker protections.

When BOLI is stretched too thin, the message is clear: worker's rights are not a priority, and bad actors can exploit their workers without consequence. We cannot allow this to continue. Oregon's workers deserve an enforcement agency that is strong enough to ensure that the laws passed by the Legislature meant to protect them actually do.

Oregon has some of the strongest worker protection laws in the country, but without BOLI's enforcement, these laws are nothing more than words on paper. BOLI needs full funding to give these protections real power, and ensure no worker is left waiting months for their rights to be enforced.

Workers deserve better. Oregon deserves better. NWRC of SMART, Local 16 and our over 2,000 members strongly urge you to fully fund BOLI and give the agency the resources it needs to uphold the rights of workers across the state.

Respectfully,

Brian Noble
Regional Manager

"The Most Productive Workforce in the Industry"