



March 3, 2025

House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 364- Operator-in-training and Water Workforce Program

Dear Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Fragala & Harbick, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express the City of Gladstone's strong support for HB 3634, the Operator in Training and Water Workforce Program. Reliable water infrastructure is essential for public health and community well-being, yet many cities, especially small ones such as Gladstone face a growing crisis as a significant portion of the current workforce is approaching retirement. It is imperative that we address this issue by ensuring that we have trained replacements ready to step in and maintain our water systems.

HB 3634 is a proactive solution that aims to recruit, train, and retain skilled professionals in this critical field. By establishing a comprehensive program focused on developing a new generation of water operators, this bill will help safeguard our water infrastructure and ensure that our community continues to have access to safe and reliable water services.

The benefits of this bill are manifold. It will provide opportunities for career development and job stability for individuals interested in the water industry, address the impending workforce gap, and ultimately contribute to the overall health and prosperity of our community. The proactive measures outlined in HB 3634 are essential for maintaining the high standards of water quality and service that the residents of Gladstone expect and deserve.

We urge you to support HB 3634 and to recognize the critical importance of investing in our water workforce. Together, we can ensure that our water infrastructure remains robust and that our community continues to thrive.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Michael Milch

Michael Milch
Gladstone Mayor