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Charlie Rice
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February 05, 2025

Dear Chair Hudson and Members of the House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 3669, the Prosperity Programs bill, which builds on the proven success of Prosperity 10,000 (P10K) and ensures Oregonians have the workforce development resources they need to succeed in a rapidly evolving labor market.

The 2023 Future Ready Oregon legislation laid the groundwork for innovative workforce programs that have transformed lives across the state. HB 3669 continues this progress by expanding access to career coaching, scholarships, paid internships, and job training, ensuring that Oregonians—especially those facing systemic barriers—can access the opportunities they need to thrive.

With funding for Future Ready's P10K set to expire this year, we must act now to reinvest in these efficient and effective programs. The data speaks for itself: In our region, 80% of the participants served have completed the program and are earning nearly \$22 an hour. Statewide, more than 8,600 Oregonians have benefited from P10K.

While \$50 million is a significant investment, the long-term benefits far outweigh the cost. For every \$1 invested, Oregon will get \$2.98 back through new tax revenue and reduced dependency on social service programs. Additionally, federal workforce funding is projected to decline by 10% this year, putting additional strain on an already challenged system. With layoffs affecting industries from government to advanced manufacturing, it is more critical than ever to ensure Oregon's public workforce system is well-resourced to support displaced workers and help them transition into new careers.

I urge you to support HB 3669. This bill is more than just a workforce initiative—it is a strategic economic driver that strengthens Oregon's communities and industries alike.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles J. Rice".

Charlie Rice
Chehalem Youth & Family Services, Executive Director

It is our mission to encourage and empower children, youth, and families to grow mentally, emotionally, and spiritually and to reach their highest potential through compassionate guidance, training, mentoring, and advocacy.