

Submitter: Heather DeSart
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce
Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3669

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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 P10K set to expire, we must act now to reinvest in these essential workforce development programs in the Northwest Oregon Works (NOW) region. The numbers speak for themselves: To date, 355 participants in the NOW region (Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook, Lincoln, and Benton Counties) have enrolled. Among those who were previously unemployed, 86% have now secured jobs living wage jobs. Statewide, P10K has provided life-changing opportunities for over 6,155 Oregonians, particularly benefiting low-income individuals, women, veterans, and communities of color. To sustain this momentum and ensure continued economic growth in our region, renewed investment in P10K is critical.

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 yuu for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Heather DeSart
Executive Director, NOW