

Submitter: Larry Williams
On Behalf Of: Self
Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3029

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

This bill has the rather lofty goal of improving "alignment across workforce development programs and projects."

Yet, the workforce structure defined in ORS 660.300 to 660.420 is too narrow to achieve true alignment in workforce development, owing in large part to the way WIOA is organized at the federal level. "WIOA requires states to strategically align their core workforce development programs to coordinate the needs of both job seekers and employers..." see <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa> - the focus on "job seekers and employers" narrows the alignment of programs too tightly to the job training, job placement, and onboarding of new employees. This ignores years education and CTE that come before the job search and years of on-the-job training, apprenticeship, and career advancement education and training that come after job placement.

In spite of the limitations, there is potential to achieve more comprehensive alignment in revising the Prosperity program in section 6. It would require a unifying principle, which I think could be found in the concept of Career Connected Learning. See

<https://www.nga.org/futureworkforce/roadmap/>

and

<https://careerconnectoregon.org/>

With "Prosperity through Career Connected Learning," we can better connect the state agencies that separately report each year under Collaboration by State Agencies On Issues Related to Career & Technical Education (ORS 344.125). We could better consider the impacts on workforce development of the current wait list on Employment Related Day Care under the Department of Early Learning and Care.

What I have learned in managing supportive services for apprentices is that the optimal fund distribution is about 1/3 for the outreach, recruitment, preparation and placement and the about 2/3 in the retention of apprentices through what is often a 5-year pathway to becoming a journeyworker. The most critical elements (so far) have been child care subsidies that build on ERRC and keep child care costs at or below

7% of household income, hardship assistance that supplements Paid Leave Oregon, and career guidance/coaching & peer support. To this we are adding a respectful workplace initiative to help employers make job sites more conducive to productive work by diverse workers: <https://www.ohsu.edu/oregon-institute-occupational-health-sciences/respectful-workplace-initiative-workplace-climate>

All of this is critical but does not fit neatly under "alignment" that tries to fit all of the state's career connected learning and workforce development under WIOA's job training.