

Submitter: Devon Lawson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3029

My name is Devon Lawson, and I am a student at Lane Community College. I am writing today to express my strong support for HB 3029, which takes critical steps toward strengthening workforce development in Oregon. As a student preparing to enter the workforce, I know firsthand how important it is to have access to high-quality training, career opportunities, and support in navigating the job market. This bill helps ensure that students and workers across the state are better prepared for meaningful, well-paying careers.

As it stands, too many students struggle to bridge the gap between education and employment. Workforce training programs can be disjointed, underfunded, or disconnected from the realities of the job market. This bill addresses these issues by improving coordination between workforce development programs, ensuring they align with industry needs, and identifying critical workforce shortages. This means that students like me will have a clearer path from education to employment in industries that need skilled workers.

I especially support the provision requiring the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to work with local industry sector partnerships. A strong collaboration between educational institutions, employers, and workforce boards can create more targeted training programs that lead to real job opportunities. However, as a student, I hope this partnership does not just focus on meeting industry demand but also prioritizes fair wages, job security, and opportunities for career advancement.

The Prosperity Program, which this bill expands, is another important aspect. Providing grants to local workforce development boards ensures that communities across the state can tailor workforce programs to their specific needs. At Lane Community College, many students come from diverse backgrounds and face unique barriers to employment. Some are first-generation college students, some are retraining for new careers after job losses, and others are balancing school with full-time work and family responsibilities. Investing in workforce development at the local level ensures that these students—my peers—receive the targeted support they need to succeed.

Oregon's future depends on a strong, skilled workforce. This bill is a step toward ensuring that workforce development is not just about filling job vacancies but about creating pathways to economic stability and upward mobility for all Oregonians. By passing this bill, you are investing in students, workers, and the long-term prosperity

of our state.

I urge you to support this bill and continue working to ensure that workforce development programs uplift all students and workers, not just those already positioned for success. Thank you for your time and consideration.