

Submitter: Devon Lawson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3066

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 3066, which allocates funding for an advanced esthetics program at the Coffee Creek Correctional Facility. This bill is a crucial step toward providing meaningful rehabilitation opportunities for incarcerated individuals, reducing recidivism, and promoting economic justice.

As a student, I understand firsthand how education and job training open doors to better opportunities. Everyone deserves the chance to build a future for themselves, regardless of past mistakes. Unfortunately, many incarcerated individuals face significant barriers to reentering society, with one of the biggest challenges being the ability to find stable, well-paying employment after release. By funding vocational education in esthetics, this bill helps break the cycle of incarceration by giving people the skills they need to support themselves and their families.

The beauty and wellness industry is growing, and trained estheticians can find meaningful work in salons, spas, and even as independent business owners. Investing in this kind of workforce development within correctional facilities not only benefits the individuals directly involved but also strengthens communities by reducing recidivism and increasing economic stability. Studies have repeatedly shown that when incarcerated individuals have access to education and job training, they are significantly less likely to return to prison. That means this bill is not just about education—it's about public safety, fiscal responsibility, and building a more just society.

I also urge lawmakers to ensure that participants in this program have access to the necessary pathways for licensure upon release. A vocational program is only truly effective if it leads to employment opportunities, and we must work to remove any regulatory barriers that would prevent formerly incarcerated individuals from using their skills in the workforce. Additionally, while this bill is a strong step forward, I encourage the legislature to expand funding for similar training programs in a wider range of industries to provide even more pathways to success.

By passing this bill, Oregon is making a commitment to rehabilitation over punishment, opportunity over exclusion, and economic empowerment over systemic barriers. I urge you to support this bill and continue investing in education and job training for incarcerated individuals as a way to build a stronger, safer, and more equitable future for all.

Thank you for your time and consideration.