

Submitter: Mike Leung

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Labor and Workplace Standards

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3881

I am writing in support of HB 3881, which would ensure that certain K-12 school construction projects utilizing State Treasury funds meet minimum registered apprenticeship employment standards and encourage efforts to recruit historically underrepresented workers in the industry. School construction—today one of the largest and most consistent areas of public works investment throughout our state—has no uniform minimum standards for apprenticeship utilization or workforce participation goals, and this bill would help change that. HB 3881 will align public school construction projects with current statutory requirements that apply to state agencies, public higher-education and community college construction funded by Oregon taxpayers.

State registered construction apprenticeship programs provide high-quality, rigorous “earn while you learn” training through a combination of classroom instruction and hands-on experience and are a proven method for developing the skilled workforce to meet ongoing industry needs.

Having access to living-wage careers is perhaps the most important way workers can build generational wealth. By prioritizing good-faith efforts for the recruitment and retention of people of color, women, and veterans, we can better ensure that public investments in school construction help make Oregon a place where these projects actively improve the lives of those who have historically been underrepresented in the industry.

Washington, California and Nevada have all established apprenticeship utilization requirements in their state laws covering K-12 school construction that either align with or otherwise exceed the minimum standards that HB 3881 proposes.

Oregon’s K-12 public schools are entrusted with a fundamental mission to educate the next generation of our state and prepare students to pursue the next steps towards fulfilling careers that enable the foundation for a decent life and stable communities. HB 3881 deepens this mission by requiring our educational institutions to actively support the ongoing training needs of our vital construction workforce, which will benefit workers, businesses, and the economic prosperity of our state broadly.

I urge your support for HB 3881.

