



Chair Grayber, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Muñoz, and Members of the House Labor and Workplace Standards Committee,

My name is Cynthia Branger Muñoz, and I submit this written testimony on behalf of the Oregon Education Association (OEA), which represents over 41,000 educators across the state. OEA supports HB 3881 because education is about preparing students for their future, and registered apprenticeships are a vital pathway to stable, family-wage careers. Ensuring that publicly funded K-12 school construction projects include apprenticeship utilization standards and workforce diversity goals is a logical and necessary step in aligning public investments with workforce development.

Oregon has made significant investments in Career & Technical Education (CTE), with 85 high school programs introducing students to the construction trades. However, without more consistent work opportunities to obtain the required hands-on training in the field, students can face barriers to advancing in construction careers and remaining in the industry. HB 3881 addresses this by requiring that 12% of labor hours on eligible K-12 school construction projects be performed by registered apprentices, increasing to 15% in 2027. This helps students gain real-world experience and provides necessary training opportunities to complete their apprenticeships.

With construction jobs in Oregon projected to grow 13% by 2033 and apprenticeship enrollment already up 62% over the past decade, we must ensure that school construction—one of the largest areas of public works investment in the state—actively supports the skilled workforce pipeline. HB 3881 also promotes economic equity by requiring contractors to establish recruitment plans for historically underrepresented groups, including women, people of color, and veterans. These steps align with existing state requirements for public higher education and community college projects, ensuring greater consistency across publicly funded construction.

Oregon's public schools prepare students for success, and our public-school construction projects should do the same. HB 3881 strengthens the connection between education and career pathways while ensuring that public investments build both infrastructure and opportunity. I urge the committee to support this bill.