



Bay Area Chamber of Commerce

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Bay Area Chamber of Commerce

145 Central Ave
Coos Bay, Oregon 97420
541-266-0868

March 18, 2025

House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development Oregon State Legislature 900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

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

On behalf of the Bay Area Chamber of Commerce, representing over 455 businesses in the Coos Bay region, we express our strong support for House Bill 3826, which establishes a workforce development program within the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to address the critical shortage in the trucking industry.

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The trucking sector is vital to Oregon's economy, ensuring the seamless movement of goods and maintaining robust supply chains. However, the industry faces significant workforce shortages, impacting businesses statewide, including those in our region. HB 3826 aims to mitigate this issue by:

- **Establishing a program within HECC** to promote workforce development initiatives in the trucking industry.
- **Awarding grants to local workforce development boards** to administer training, education, and support services for individuals seeking careers in trucking.
- **Providing financial assistance** for participants to cover costs such as tuition, training, and transportation, thereby reducing barriers to entry.
- **Offering wraparound supports**, including vehicle repair assistance, housing assistance, and career counseling, to ensure participant success.

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By implementing these measures, HB 3826 will:

- **Increase the number of commercial driver license holders**, addressing workforce shortages and ensuring the reliability of supply chains.
- **Support economic growth** by providing local businesses with access to a skilled trucking workforce.
- **Create pathways to sustainable careers** for individuals from communities typically underrepresented in the trucking industry.

The Bay Area Chamber of Commerce believes that HB 3826 is a proactive step toward strengthening Oregon's transportation infrastructure and economic vitality. We urge the committee to support this legislation and help drive Oregon's economy forward.



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