

Submitter: Melissa Padgett
On Behalf Of: tongue Point Job Corps
Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB460

24 March 2025

To: Oregon State Legislature

Re: Support for Senate Bill 460

On behalf of Tongue Point Job Corps Center (TPJCC), I am writing to express our strong support for Senate Bill 460, sponsored by Senator Weber and Representative Javadi. This proposed legislation represents an important step in expanding opportunities for pre-apprenticeship participants, including our Job Corps students, by exempting them from prevailing wage requirements on public works projects. At TPJCC, our mission is to prepare young adults for high-demand careers, with a strong emphasis on skilled trades and construction industry pathways. A key component of our training involves placing students in critical internship roles that provide them with hands-on experience and industry exposure. However, the current prevailing wage requirements create barriers to securing these placements, as many employers are unable to take on pre-apprentices without incurring unsustainable labor costs.

By amending ORS 279C.810 to exempt pre-apprenticeship participants from prevailing wage laws, Senate Bill 460 will:

- Increase access to real-world training opportunities for our students.
- Strengthen partnerships with local employers, unions, and contractors who need skilled workers.
- Position Job Corps graduates for placements in union apprenticeships and construction industry jobs throughout Oregon and southern Washington.
- Help address the skilled labor shortage in the region by ensuring a steady pipeline of trained, job-ready workers.

This legislation aligns with workforce development goals and will provide a direct benefit to Oregon's construction industry, public works projects, and economic growth. By removing obstacles to pre-apprenticeship placements, Senate Bill 460 ensures that our students have the opportunity to gain essential trade skills, secure union placements, and contribute to vital infrastructure projects in our communities. We respectfully urge you to support and advance Senate Bill 460, recognizing its impact on workforce readiness, economic opportunity, and the future of skilled trades in Oregon. Thank you for your time and consideration

Sincerely,

Melissa J. Padgett

Business Community Liaison and Work Base Specialist, Tongue Point Job Corps Center

<https://tonguepoint.jobcorps.gov/>