

Date: May 1st, 2025

From: Ted Cooper (he/him), Executive Vice-President, AFT-Oregon

Re: Support for “Relating to unemployment insurance benefits for employees unemployed due to a labor dispute; declaring an emergency- [SB-916](#)”

Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Munoz and Elmer and Members of the committee,

Thank you for considering this testimony. My name is Ted Cooper, and I am the Executive Vice President of AFT-Oregon. In my capacity as an officer of AFT-Oregon and a labor union member, I urge you to vote for SB 916.

AFT-Oregon represents over 18,000 education workers across Oregon. On behalf of our members, we strongly encourage your support of SB 916 which would repeal the law blocking unemployment benefits to workers on strike. This bill would help ensure that workers are able to stay afloat while fighting for a fair contract.

This bill would support workers negotiating fair wages and working conditions, and would create a financial incentive for employers to avoid strikes, in the form of increased unemployment insurance tax payments following a strike for which their workers received unemployment insurance. These incentives are ultimately in everyone’s interest. Please refer to the February 10 [testimony](#) in support submitted by fellow AFT-Oregon officer Felicity Ratway, who made the argument well.

Signed,

Ted Cooper (he/him)

AFT-Oregon, Executive Vice-President

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