

Esteemed Chair Bowman, Vice Chairs Pham and Drazen, and Committee Members:

My name is Jani Turner. I appreciate the opportunity to speak in favor of House Bill 3881. I am one of the Apprenticeship Coordinators for the Oregon Laborers, LiUNA Local 737; I am also a graduated apprentice. My last hours worked as an apprentice were on the Grant High School Project.

HB 3881 expands apprenticeship requirements to projects in the K through 12 sector. Apprenticeship requirements open doors for career-seekers often left behind, and lift workplace (and safety) standards for everyone.

The Oregon Laborers Apprenticeship operates under the MA1058 Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee. Our program is hours based, like many others, and takes approximately 2 years to complete. We have fewer barriers than most for entry into our program, which gives more people the opportunity to enter a highly skilled, living-wage career they would otherwise not get. A career complete with retirement and health benefits.

Our curriculum is developed by the best in our trade, and is taught by instructors who have achieved, or are working toward their ANSI Certification. Construction Craft Laborers cover a vast range of work scopes; we work in everything from Building Construction and Demolition to Heavy Highway and Environmental Remediation. Our training curriculum attends to the details in each of these and prepares our members for work in any or all of them, over the course of their career. Some members prefer the variety of General Labor, while others specialize in areas such as Asbestos Abatement or Concrete.

All classes offered at our training center are free for the membership to attend; our training center is privately funded by our contractor partners and members. Our apprenticeship program provides the necessary certifications and refreshers to keep membership at the highest standard for the industry. It is a pretty well-known fact that it takes money to make money. That can often be the biggest barrier for career-seekers looking to lift their family out of poverty. The opportunity we provide apprentices includes a

grant for their first set of tools, boots, rain gear, and childcare assistance. Apprentices who live more than 60 miles from our training center receive lodging, lunches at the training center, a meal stipend and gas reimbursement by mileage every time they attend class. It's one full week every three to four months.

Now imagine for a moment, if you will, that you're a new apprentice on your first project. It's scary, intimidating, and you're unsure where you're supposed to go. But you make it through your first week. Then your second. And then the job ends, and you're laid off the following Tuesday. So, you call in and get another dispatch- this one lasts 2 months. Now you're wondering if it's you, or if this is normal... it's a lingering doubt. It's challenging to get proficient when everything changes around you all the time. Significant public works projects like school construction provide opportunities that other more intermittent projects cannot. Consistency, longevity, time to make mistakes and learn from them. It's what every apprentice needs. Time. Not every project has that to offer.

In my experience, K-12 projects provide a unique opportunity for people learning their craft. Job site familiarity relieves stress and opens the space for retention. All projects are completed in phases, and once the routine is learned the skills can be mastered. I went from being an apprentice learning my craft, to a journey worker teaching the next apprentice on the Grant High School project. That project holds many memories for me- not the least of which is that my husband was (for a short time) my apprentice.

I'd like to conclude on a slightly more personal note. Twenty years ago, my husband and I met in our addiction. I'll skip ahead quite a bit; we've been clean around 12 years. We have two beautiful daughters, who we fought to regain custody of- twice. That last battle was the turning point in my life. No gigantic man on a construction site could ever intimidate me after everything I overcame to restore my family. I beat domestic violence, addiction, and imposter syndrome to sit before you today. I am passionate about my craft, and even more passionate about the fact that everyone deserves this opportunity. My husband was formerly justice-involved yet is now a productive member of society. We're

homeowners. Our neighbor across the street is a Portland Police officer. Twelve years ago, we were sleeping under a bridge; today, he's working on the Abernethy Bridge project.

I strongly support HB 3881 because it will provide more of these opportunities to members of our community, ultimately lifting the community up along with the individual. When a person thrives, their community thrives. Apprenticeships are key to learning a craft- but they are more than that. My apprenticeship taught me leadership skills, strengthened my self-worth, and provided me with a path to move up. They are also an investment for the contractors as well. Apprentice wages are a percentage of their respective craft's journeyman scale. Sure, that's an obvious savings for the contractor, but it's more than that for most. It's an opportunity to hire someone while they're green and teach them "their way." Efficient crews save contractors money and save time on projects. Time is also money. That's a win-win for everyone.

Thank you for your time.