

SHEET METAL | AIR | RAIL | TRANSPORTATION
SMART
International Association of
Sheet Metal, Air, Rail, Transportation Workers
LOCAL UNION NO. 16
2379 N.E. 178th AVE., SUITE 16
PORTLAND, OREGON 97230-5957
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February 9, 2026

Chair: Senator Kathleen Taylor
Vice Chair: Senator Cedric Hayden
Members of the Committee on Labor and Business:

RE: **No, on SB-1566**

SB-1566

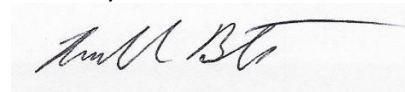
My Name is Russ Benton. I'm a Regional Representative and Political Coordinator for the Sheet Metal Workers of SMART Local 16.

I am writing this letter on behalf of over 2,000 SMART Local 16 members in opposition to SB-1566. I have been working in the construction industry for the past 36 years.

Oregon's construction industry has been hit especially hard in 2025 due to federal funding being cut across many sectors by the current federal administration. This has caused an economic downturn in our state, in addition to an employment and affordability crisis in Oregon. Many working families in Oregon are struggling to afford basic housing and childcare needs. Their jobs simply do not pay enough to keep up with rising costs. Decades of attacks on working people and our unions around the country have had a negative impact on employment, and what workers earn. Prevailing wage is the core policy that supports construction workers in the state of Oregon. Prevailing wage is the reason that jobs in the Building Trades are far more likely to be living wage jobs, than jobs in many other sectors. Prevailing wage allows members of our unions—as well as construction workers broadly—to support their families through good wages, healthcare, and retirement benefits. Prevailing wages help support continued investment in workforce training and development along with creating disposable income that is recirculated in their local communities. This promotes economic growth for the small businesses where these dollars are spent. An attack on working family's wages during a time when so many Oregonians are struggling is unacceptable.

We urge the committee to support Living wages for Oregonians and **vote NO on SB-1566**

Sincerely



Russ Benton
Regional Representative/ Political Coordinator
Sheet Metal Workers
SMART Local 16
NWRC,