

Submitter: Devon Lawson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4012
Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Hayden, and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Devon Lawson. I am testifying today in support of HB 4012 A.

I support this bill because it addresses a "shadow economy" in our construction sector that harms workers, consumers, and honest business owners.

We have thousands of licensed contractors in Oregon who pay their taxes, carry insurance, and follow safety rules. Every day, they are undercut by unlicensed entities who cheat the system. These bad actors don't pay workers' comp, they don't pay payroll taxes, and they cut corners on safety. This creates an unfair market where the "cheater" wins. HB 4012 A is not a new regulation on honest businesses; it is a mechanism to catch the dishonest ones. It ensures that businesses that play by the rules aren't punished for their integrity. This is why groups like the AGC support this bill.

The unlicensed sector is where the most egregious labor violations occur. This is where we see wage theft, dangerous working conditions, and the exploitation of vulnerable populations who have no recourse. Currently, the Construction Contractors Board (CCB) reviews licenses, and BOLI reviews labor law. They often operate in silos. This bill mandates that they collaborate. It turns the state's fragmented attention into a focused beam of light on the industry's darkest part.

This bill is a "targeted assessment." It is a pilot program to gather facts. We cannot solve the problem of the underground construction economy if we don't understand its scope. This bill gives us the data we need to make evidence-based decisions in 2027.

HB 4012 A aligns organized labor's interests with those of responsible capital. It targets the parasites of the industry who exploit workers and undercut legitimate commerce.

I urge a "Yes" vote.

Thank you