

Date: February 18, 2026
To: Senate Committee on Finance & Revenue
Oregon State Legislature

Subject: Support Testimony for Senate Bill 1586



Chair Broadman and Committee members,

First, I offer my thanks to Senator Sollman and the SB 1586 sponsors, because this is an important bill, worthy of consideration and passage in this short session.

I'm Andrew Beyer, CEO of EC Electric, representing both EC and the Oregon chapters of the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA). We represent over 150 Oregon electrical contractors. We provide over 10 million skilled labor hours with great pay and benefits annually, statewide. Our projects range from residential service vans to complicated industrial facilities, and everything in between.

EC Electric provides roughly 2 million of those 10 million hours, with revenue just under \$500 million dollars. Our HQ is in Portland, with offices in Albany, Eugene, Redmond, Bay City, Newport, Hermiston, Seattle, Pasco and very recently, Boise. More about Boise in a moment.

I think my personal story has some relevance to the topic at hand. I arrived in Oregon in 1973 with \$500, a borrowed Volkswagen van, and a few hand tools. I currently hold a BS from Southern Oregon, a journeyman Carpenter's card and an MBA from the University of Oregon.

My wife and son are both native Oregonians. Portland has been my home for over 50 years. I started with \$500, and I now run a \$500 million Oregon-based company. Education combined with opportunity.

I ask you to consider: Is that type of opportunity still available in Oregon?

My answer: Not as it currently stands in the marketplace.

- Businesses are leaving, not moving here.
- Wealth is leaving at an alarming rate.
- Our employees are leaving to work elsewhere.

Unemployment in Oregon just topped 5%.

For electricians it's over 12%

For electrical apprentices it's over 20%

Layoffs: IBEW48 serving the Portland Metro area: 1,052 – the highest in decades. IBEW280 serving the central Willamette Valley and Bend: 256 – the highest in decades.

As you search for dollars to pay Oregon's bills, please keep in mind that those lost electricians' wages represent over \$12 MILLION dollars of lost tax revenue, per year. We need those jobs BACK in Oregon ...

But back to Boise, where we just opened a new office.

Last week I met with our very best Superintendent, I'll call him Dave, now working in Boise. He is an incredibly talented leader and electrician. He has helped build some of the most complicated electrical systems on the planet, right here in Oregon, leading teams of hundreds of electricians. He can get a job anywhere, at much higher pay, but he stays with us as a loyal 20-year employee, and loyal Oregonian. Even though he is now in Boise and his wife and 4 children are here in the

Portland area he wants to stay with us. **For now.** As we discussed his future, he worried about his children and what opportunities they would have. Would they be better off in Idaho? What do YOU think I should tell him?

To make things worse, I just returned from a National NECA conference. The HEADLINE: All over the US contractors are begging for electricians and setting up apprentice programs. The current shortage? THOUSANDS of electricians needed.

We already have a nationally recognized apprentice training program in Portland. Each year for the past decade we have added hundreds of apprentices to our training program.

This year? ZERO! ZERO!!! There are no jobs for them.

A NATIONAL SHORTAGE of electricians, and yet Portland and Seattle have THOUSANDS of unemployed electricians. EC is now sending Oregon electricians to Idaho, Wyoming, Louisiana, Nevada and Pennsylvania.

For me, this is both sad and unfortunate because I live in and love Oregon.

Why is this happening? Because other states have worked hard to attract and support businesses while Oregon and our cities have not focused on attracting or retaining businesses and have added endless processes and delays to obtain permits while increasing business and personal taxes.

Unless you choose to change the narrative and increase the funding and environment for jobs, infrastructure and business development, Oregon will continue to whither – our GDP has been declining for a decade now.

Please pass SB1586. It is a small step in the right direction. As you all know, each great journey begins with a single step forward. Please take this step and invest in our future and the economic engines of our state — so Dave and his family can thrive rather than leave ... and we will have jobs for all of our children and Grandchildren.

Thank you for listening.

Andrew Beyer,
Chief Executive Officer of EC Electric
Oregon NECA Legislative Committee