

April 3, 2013

Public Testimony

Ways and Means Education Sub-Committee

Supporting \$10 million for workforce development in the Governor's Recommended Budget

Good morning Co-Chair Komp, Co-Chair Monroe and committee members. My name is Karen Cook, Training Coordinator at A.R.E. Manufacturing, Inc. I am excited to be here today to describe the benefits and value of funding Workforce Development. For A.R.E. Manufacturing, Inc., funds for Back to Work Oregon and specifically On the Job Training are a critical component to our ability to develop new and existing workers into family supporting careers in manufacturing.

A.R.E. Manufacturing, Inc. is a contract precision CNC machine shop. Our internal On the Job Training Program is perfectly suited for new or transitioning workers that have basic skills in physical science and applied mathematics. Funding from Back to Work Oregon is the financial bridge from "potential" to hands-on experience with the opportunity to build a career. It reduces the impact of cyclical demands on our cash flow allowing more long term planning. Funding for On the Job Training gives us the option of hiring and training in advance of anticipated demand. We are able to utilize our slower production periods to train and prepare our employees to meet the challenges of high demand periods.

Today's business environment requires flexibility and adaptability. A skilled, trained workforce provides that flexibility and adaptability. On the Job Training is a cost-effective way for workers and employers to explore skill matches and opportunities before investing \$10's of thousands in higher education. Workers who find that *good* match are then able to make informed decisions about pursuing higher education – often with employer tuition support.

On the Job Training is an important element in our mutual goal to "Invest Wisely in Education". On the Job Training takes the concept of STEM skills and places them firmly in the hands of workers. On the Job Training works hand in hand with educators to achieve 40-40-20 by 2025.

Please join me in supporting Governor Kitzhaber's \$10 million budget proposal for workforce development. Thank you for this opportunity, your time and attention.

Sincerely,



Karen K. Cook

Training Coordinator

A.R.E. Manufacturing, Inc.

518 S Springbrook Rd

Newberg, OR 97132

(503) 538-0350

karen@aremanufacturing.com