



February 3, 2014

**Testimony to the House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee
Regarding Amendment to the Education 40-40-20 Goals (HB 4058)**

Provided by: Oregon Bureau of Labor & Industries

The Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of HB 4058. Attainment of a journey level certificate in a skilled trade through a registered apprenticeship program should be an essential part of the State's strategy to achieve the 40-40-20 education goals by 2025 as endorsed by the Department of Education and Governor Kitzhaber.

Middle opportunity jobs make up the largest part of Oregon's and the nation's labor market. They require more education than high school, but less than a four-year degree. Registered Apprenticeship, the completion of specific academic and industry/trade training to develop required skills, is the ideal strategy for preparing Oregonians for these middle opportunity jobs.

The "middle 40%" of the Oregon goal represents the requirements for middle opportunity careers and the middle steps of career ladders that extend to 4-year and graduate level requirements of the "first 40%." On average, approximately 1,200 Oregonians obtain their industry approved journey certification each year. Should graduates choose to complete 9 – 12 general education credits, they may also obtain an associate's degree from Oregon's Community College system, making registered apprenticeship an essential tool in closing the state's middle opportunity job gap in most occupations. As more employers become active participants in developing their work forces, value can be realized by increased utilization of registered apprenticeship.

While the current base for registered apprenticeship in Oregon is principally in the construction industry, the combination of occupational standards, supervised on-the-job training, and classroom instruction make the apprenticeship model applicable to almost any industry cluster. Expanded use of the apprenticeship model of training would help Oregon maximize its investments in the community college system by combining classroom education with on-the-job experience.

Registered apprenticeships are ideal for high-demand careers such as industrial electricians, aircraft mechanics, or plumbers. Examples of occupations where apprenticeships are underutilized in Oregon include dental assistants, legal assistants, auto mechanics, accountants, and fire fighters. Many Oregonians are currently in school studying these disciplines with no direct connection to or employment within the industry

cluster that they are pursuing. Apprenticeship can articulate work and education resulting in a better trained worker for the employer.

Registered apprenticeship recognizes the significant value of Career and Technical Education (CTE) as a tool for preparing current and future workers and creating more opportunities for students transitioning out of high school. Expanding CTE and career pathways in high-demand occupations, enhancing dual enrollment opportunities, and increasing articulation agreements between community colleges and universities are all steps that can help build the employee base for employers and would feed the registered apprenticeship system.

Tracking other credentials, such as career pathways certificates, apprenticeship certifications, and other industry certifications that identify and document the skills required in middle opportunity careers are all useful and essential for achievement and effective accountability of achievement of the “middle 40%” goal. Accordingly, the Bureau of Labor and Industries enthusiastically support HB 4058 and the inclusion of registered apprenticeship as part of the 40-40-20 education goals.

Submitted by Anna Braun BOLI Legislative Director (503) 910-7023