



We Urge Your Support for SB 137

SB 137 makes a very simple fix to clarify public-private partnership laws in public contracting.

The 2007 legislature passed a bill to affirm that when over \$750,000 of public funds is used on a construction project contracted through a public-private partnership model, prevailing wage standards apply. Most in the construction industry operated with the understanding that prevailing wage would be the requirement on all public-private partnerships that met this threshold of public investment.

However, we have found that the specificity of the statutory language allowed for a scenario where a construction project would not prevail even if it used over \$750,000 in public money and was built on public land. At the same time, a project using over \$750,000 of public money and being built on *private land* would prevail. We do not believe it was the intention of the legislature to allow for a scenario where projects with *less* public investment prevail, while projects with *more* public investments do not.

SB 137 removes the words “privately owned” so that current law is upheld and projects that meet the threshold for public investments prevail on private lands AND on public lands.

Payment of prevailing wage is an important public policy, both for Oregon families and for Oregon’s economy. Prevailing wage laws not only ensure a better-paid, better-trained workforce, but also help facilitate apprenticeship programs to grow our workforce into the future. It is for that reason, we believe it is in the public’s interest to provide prevailing wage on both public and private lands when the public investment threshold is reached.