

April 17, 2015

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House Committee on Higher Education, Innovation and Workforce Development  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

**Subject: Testimony in Opposition to HB 2616**

I would like to preface my opposition to HB 2616 by saying that I am a staunch supporter of career technical education (CTE), the revitalization of CTE in the K-12 curriculum, and especially the restoration of funding for community colleges, the premier providers of CTE to Oregon's workforce.

I have devoted the past 13 years to workforce and small business development as well as economic development in eastern Oregon. Active on statewide task forces, regional commissions, and local work groups, I have served as president of the Round-Up City Development Corporation and member of both the Oregon Workforce Alliance and Regions 12 and 13 Regional Workforce Investment Boards. I am a member and past Board member of the Oregon Economic Development Association, and long-time member of the Workforce Strategies Committee of the Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development.

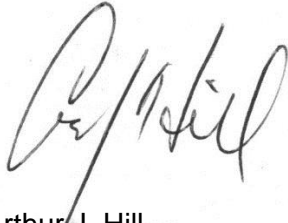
In these capacities I have seen years of disinvestment in Oregon's workforce. I have watched our workforce quality ranking drop to 39<sup>th</sup> in the country and our ability to attract major employers and grow small businesses stagnate for lack of skilled labor. I have witnessed CTE programs close for lack of public funding despite private sector willingness to support them. I have seen a greater and greater share of CTE costs fall on the students who can least afford them.

Despite or perhaps because of, my commitment to and support of sustainable CTE funding, I am vehemently opposed to HB 2616 and others like it that attempt to band-aid a lack of systemic funding for CTE education and training with funding tactics that are disincentives for the very employers who create jobs for our CTE graduates. Worse, HB 2616 expands statutory mandates from public sector projects to private sector projects, further discouraging private sector development that creates jobs, increases our tax base for funding CTE programs, and encourages further investment in our State.

On face value, I am sure someone thinks that HB 2616 will have a positive revenue impact. The truth is, like other bills that shift the financial burden for education to employers or students, HB 2616 will have a long term negative impact on revenue because Oregon businesses won't expand or because businesses will go to other states with more equitable

funding for education and training instead of punitive levies on the private sector struggling to create jobs.

I sincerely hope that you will recognize the negative consequences of HB 2616 in time to prevent them. Please stop it from becoming law and work with employers to insure equitable, responsible and sustainable funding of CTE programs for Oregon's workforce.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Hill'.

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