



Tom Chamberlain, *President*  
Barbara Byrd, *Secretary-Treasurer*

3645 SE 32nd Ave,  
Portland, OR 97202  
www.oraficio.org

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503-232-1195

afl-cio@oraficio.org

To: Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Thatcher  
Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce

Fr: Graham Trainor, Oregon AFL-CIO

Re: **Strong Opposition to SB 814**

April 20, 2015

Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Thatcher and Members of the Committee:

My name is Graham Trainor and I'm here with the Oregon AFL-CIO, the statewide federation of labor unions representing over 300,000 working Oregonians in every community and in every corner of this state. Our members and community partners are on the front lines of the fight to create an economy that truly works for ALL Oregonians and we have grave concerns about SB 814 and its significant impact on communities throughout Oregon.

Workers and community members have the best, most suitable perspective on what change is needed in their own cities, towns and communities to achieve these economic fairness objectives. At the same time, local governments have a fundamental obligation of being responsive to the needs of their communities whether you are in Ontario, Eugene, Medford or Portland.

It has long been the case that local governments, those closest to the people they are elected to represent, set important standards that often pave the way for eventual statewide standards. While it can take many years for public opinion and cultural shifts to make a statewide policy a reality after a local government has acted, this avenue for progress and innovation is a critical part of the fabric that makes Oregon the state we all love.

You have heard today from employers and those in the business community that they desire statewide consistency rather than a smattering of different policies throughout Oregon creating a burden to efficiency and predictability. While we disagree with the broad and overreaching approach in this bill, we can understand this simple economic rationale. What I would ask of you, though, is whether communities like Bend and Medford are the same? Are workers in Portland and Astoria facing the same economic realities? Do residents of Ontario and Keizer feel an economic recession in the same way? Is a worker in Eugene and Albany facing the same cost of living?

SB 814, as you've heard, is a page out of the playbook of a number of national organizations that aim to interfere with the ability for communities, and the local governments that represent them, to pass their own laws and seek solutions for problems that arise at the local level. While we believe that this Legislature will do what is best for our state and communities across Oregon by not passing SB 814, action on a bill like this would be a signal to working Oregonians in every corner of our state that their voices and opinions do not matter and the state knows best when it comes to working standards and a host of other matters given how broad this bill is written.

***We, along with coalitions we work with in communities around the state, urge you to oppose SB 814 and ensure that working Oregonians continue to have a voice in finding local solutions to local problems that arise in the workplace and beyond.***

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.