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TO: Chair Dembrow  
Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce and General Government

FR: The Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: Statement from the Oregon AFL-CIO Regarding the Practice of Wage Theft, SB 1587

February 4, 2016

The Oregon AFL-CIO, representing over 300,000 working Oregonians, is a voice for all workers in the legislative process. As we consider our role as a worker advocate, we cannot overlook our obligation to speak up against the all-too-common practice of wage theft.

Workers report an average of \$4.7 million in wages stolen to the Bureau of Labor and Industry each year, with many workers reporting to the Federal Department of Labor, community based organizations or not at all, making the actual sum of stolen wages much higher. We also know that it is far too common for workers to never see any of their owed wages, even after a ruling in favor or the complainant has been made. Only 28% of wages stolen during a 3 year period ending in 2013 were ever returned to the worker. It is glaringly obvious that new policy solutions are necessary to curb this practice.

We urge the legislature to take bold steps in this legislative session and beyond to ensure Oregonians get paid fairly for a day's work.

**The Oregon AFL-CIO encourages your support of strong wage enforcement policies.**