



Statement in Opposition to SB 474

The Oregon Landscape Contractors Association (OLCA), the trade association for landscape professionals in Oregon, opposes SB 474 which would eliminate the continuing education requirements for landscape construction professionals. OLCA has been a longtime advocate for professionalism within the landscape industry.

The association promotes education and certification programs for the industry and has supported the Landscape Contractors Board's continuing education requirements for landscape professionals. Training in pesticides, soils, plants, irrigation and drainage systems, water conservation, low-voltage lighting, ornamental water features, retaining walls, decks, patios and fencing is important as the landscape industry continues to grow in Oregon's changing environment. Additionally, knowledge of the changing rules regulating the industry is critical for both the landscape professionals and the protection of the consumer.

In the 2015 legislative session, the Senate Business and Transportation Committee adopted the recommendations of a work group convened by Senator Chuck Thomsen to address issues with the Oregon Landscape Contractors Board (LCB) and its regulations. The work group included representatives from OCLA, other landscape organizations, LCB and the CCB, water purveyors and the League of Cities. After meeting a half-dozen times over 16 months, the recommendations became SB 580 and were unanimously adopted by both chambers.

One of those changes reduced the number of continuing education hours (CEH) required for license renewal to 16 hours of CEH over a two-year period for licensees with less than 5 years of experience as an active licensee and 8 hours every two years of CEH for active licensees with over 5 years of experience. Prior to that, the requirement was 20 hours every 2 years. OLCA supported that change but opposes any further reduction in the number of continuing education hours.

*OLCA believes that continuing education enhances both consumer protection and the landscape contractors' ability to better serve their consumers. **We urge your opposition to SB 474.***