



March 30, 2017

The Honorable Jeff Reardon, Chair  
The Honorable Teresa Alonso Leon, Vice-Chair  
The Honorable Gene Whisnant, Vice-Chair  
House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development

RE: House Bill 2965

Chair Reardon, Vice-Chairs Alonso Leon and Whisnant, and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Disabilities Commission (ODC) supports HB 2965, which would establish the Task Force on Workforce Development for People with Disabilities. The Task Force would evaluate employment programs for people with disabilities, report on findings and make recommendations to each workforce committee, and work on legislative concepts for future legislative sessions. The Task Force would sunset on December 31, 2020.

The Task Force's scope and duties are aligned with several statutory duties of ODC, which include:

- (1) Publicizing the needs and concerns of individuals with disabilities as they relate to the full achievement of economic, social, legal and political equity;
- (2) Studying and reporting on state agency programs and budgets that affect individuals with disabilities;
- (3) Informing individuals with disabilities where they may obtain assistance in rehabilitation and employment and about laws prohibiting discrimination in employment as a result of disability;

- (4) Cooperating with and assisting other interest groups in rehabilitation and employment of individuals with disabilities and encouraging public and private employers to undertake affirmative action to assure equitable employment of individuals with disabilities;
- (5) Giving impetus and assistance to local community committees and fostering a more equitable climate for rehabilitation and equitable employment of individuals with disabilities;
- (6) Promoting a continuous program of information and education to employers and the general public so they are aware of and sensitive to the needs and desires of individuals with disabilities for equitable education and training that will assure individuals with disabilities of their full vocational potentials; and
- (7) Promoting a continuous information program for placement of individuals with disabilities in suitable employment.

The Oregon Disabilities Commission thanks the Committee for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 2965.

Sincerely,



Theodore Wenk  
Oregon Disabilities Commission,  
Chairperson