



OREGON STATE FIRE FIGHTERS COUNCIL

265 Commercial Street S.E., Suite 260 • Salem, Oregon 97301 • Phone (503) 540-0648 • Fax (503) 391-5878
International Association of Fire Fighters
AFL-CIO CLC

April 2, 2017

The Honorable Kathleen Taylor
Chair of Senate Workforce Committee
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97030

Re: Senate Bill 1040

Chair Taylor and Committee Members,

The Oregon State Fire Fighters Council is in support of Senate Bill 1040, the Rural Oregon Worker Protection Act.

Since its inception in 1973, 43 years ago, your career firefighters throughout the State of Oregon have bargained safety as an integral piece of our contract with employers. This bill allows our private sector partners to secure working agreements with substantial workplace safety guarantees that too often we know workplaces in right-to-work states don't have. The rate of workplace fatalities is 49% higher in so called "right-to-work" states¹, Oregon has an opportunity to protect all workers by passing this important legislation.

The private sector employees' right to collectively bargain is a fundamental right afforded to Oregonians for many years. We encourage to you support Senate Bill 1040.

A sustainable, safe workplace is a fundamental part of being a productive Oregonian. Keeping Oregon separate from a rising tide of attacks on workers is a critical component to a healthy economy. Having a collective voice creates sustainable living wage jobs throughout Oregon. This bill protects the idea that organized employees continue having a say in the workplace.

In closing, the Oregon State Fire Fighters Council urge your passage of this bill.

Regards,

Karl Koenig
Legislative Director

¹ Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries in 2014.