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TO: Chair Holvey
Vice-Chair Bynum
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Members of the House Committee on Business and Labor

FR: Graham Trainor, Oregon AFL-CIO

RE: *Support for Economic Fairness and Worker Protection Bills (HB 2169, HB 2180, HB 2181)*

February 13, 2017

The Oregon AFL-CIO represents over 300,000 working Oregonians and is a voice for all workers in the legislative process. Our members work in many sectors of Oregon's economy, some of which are quite prone to having wages stolen by their employer. However, our interest in this issue is, more importantly, on behalf of workers that will likely never be represented by a union or be covered by a collective bargaining agreement. Despite Oregon's economic recovery and, by many standards, an economy on firm footing, many in today's workforce are still getting left behind. With hundreds of thousands of Oregon workers doing low wage work, many of whom also rely on public assistance to provide for their families, it's clear that today's economy looks much different than it did before the Great Recession.

We applaud the Oregon Legislature's willingness to take great strides in the last few years to help make Oregon's economy work for ALL workers. Unfortunately, and despite the recent progress on workplace standards and balancing the playing field and between workers and employers, many Oregon workers are still vulnerable to unfair, yet legal, workplace practices that make it harder to seek remedies and payment of wages they are owed under current law.

While no single policy change will completely fix the current loopholes and barriers that workers face to gain access to owed wages, there are three bills before you today that can offer some key tools to workers that are most vulnerable in this economy.

- *HB 2169: Giving Workers More Access to Courts*
- *HB 2180: Giving Workers Ability to Collect Wages After a Court Judgement*
- *HB 2181: Protecting Workers from Retaliation*

The Oregon AFL-CIO supports these bills, and other policies aimed at giving workers the ability to collect the wages they are owed under Oregon's wage and hour laws. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.