

Mission: To enhance the region's economy and quality of life by providing efficient cargo and air passenger access to national and global markets.



February 1, 2018

The Honorable Jeff Reardon, Chair
House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee
900 Court Street NE, H-473
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Representative Reardon:

I am writing on behalf of the Port of Portland (Port) to express our support for House Bill 4042 - Prosperity 1000. The Port's mission is to enhance the region's economy and quality of life by providing efficient cargo and air passenger access to national and global markets, and by promoting industrial development. In executing on this mission, the Port is committed to leveraging our strengths to create a more equitable and prosperous region.

HB 4042 offers an innovative approach to address poverty and build a scalable, sustainable workforce training model that supports individual and business prosperity across the state. The pilot's focus on East Multnomah County is appropriate as this area has the highest poverty level in the state, and has experienced persistent income declines over the past 10 years. Lower wage employment and income disparity is a significant issue in this racially and ethnically diverse community. At the same time, regional employers that offer high quality jobs in industries such as healthcare, construction, and manufacturing are facing a shortage of skilled workers.

The targeted workforce training proposed in HB 4042 is an important part of the solution and key to strengthening our labor market and support our growing economy. HB 4042 offers an opportunity to help ensure all residents, especially those living in areas of concentrated poverty, have an opportunity to fully participate in the region's economic success. HB 4042 offers a unique chance to foster a stronger and more equitable future for the region and the State.

The Port supports HB 4042 and urges the committee's support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Keith a Leavitt'.

Keith Leavitt
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