



**February 7, 2018**

**Before the  
House Committee on Higher Education  
And Workforce Development**

**In support of HB 4042**

**Jim McCauley, Government Relations Manager, Washington County**

On behalf of the Washington County Board of Commissioners I want express our support for HB 4042, Prosperity 1000.

This bill establishes a needed funding link with the launch of an aggressive workforce training program in the top two most impoverished communities in Oregon.

Washington County has worked through a community led process identifying critical service needs. There are three components to this process known as “Thrives”. Recommendations include more resources for early childhood development, affordable housing and workforce training.

Despite the visible economic success in Washington County we still have communities that need additional help. Investing in the workforce component as envisioned in HB 2042 is potentially the most significant payoff to stabilizing individuals and families. We believe that focus on workforce training will lead to stability for other community needs including housing.

Metrics provided by Work Systems Inc. show that with an investment of roughly \$3,500/person the average wage earned by those completing the program is \$17/hour. This translates into an annual wage of over \$35,000. Apply the state income tax and you effectively are able to pay for the program with an increase in taxes and reduced reliance on human service programs.

When this session opened earlier this week one of the messages from Governor Brown during the “State of the State” speech was a renewed focus and investment on workforce training. We are hopeful that HB 4042 is viewed as a template to be replicated across Oregon with a start in one of the state’s region most equipped to develop skilled labor force for a demand that remains unmet.