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Testimony by
Norman Eder
Executive Director
Manufacturing 21 Coalition

Supporting HB 4042

February 8, 2018

Members of the Committee:

My Name is Norman Eder. I am Executive Director of the Manufacturing 21 Coalition. The coalition was formed in 2004 to advocate for a better trained workforce for our state's manufacturing companies. Over the past three years we have focused our attention on creating career opportunities for at risk and so-called opportunity youth.

Our interest is clear. Manufacturing companies need younger work-ready employees and the largest pool of potential candidates for entry-level jobs are the least likely to be qualified for jobs.

We support this bill, Prosperity 1000, HB 4042, because it targets the right young people with the right mix of support and resources at the right time. The bill fits perfectly with the new Connect2Careers program that Manufacturing 21 and Worksystems, Inc. have launched in the Portland area.

The youth targeted for help by this bill will be enrolled in the Connect2Careers program. This will facilitate their movement into skills assessments, training, internships, and jobs.

The greatest sin in a manufacturing plant is waste. And there is nothing more wasteful than stranded assets. Today the 1,000 young adults who will be helped by this bill represent stranded human assets. Oregon cannot afford to leave thousands of our young people behind.

Passage of this bill is a small but important step in this direction.