



Good afternoon Representative Smith Warner, Senator Roblan and members of the committee. My name is Lori Olund and I am President of Miles Fiberglass & Composites. In addition to serving as President of our company I have served on the following boards: Oregon Workforce Investment, Sabin Skill Center, and Clackamas Community College Advisory Board. I am currently serving on the School Board for Clackamas Academy of Industrial Science, Oregon Manufacturing Extension Partnership and Oregon Business & Industry. In relation to Oregon's education system, I went through the Oregon Public School system as well as my two children.

I appreciate your willingness to research the education system in our state, its complexities and work on ways to improve the system as a whole to achieve better outcomes. This will be a challenging task but so important to many stakeholders of Oregon. We want you to know that business is ready to partner and have a comprehensive conversation on creating a quality public education system that delivers education in a variety of ways to a variety of students.

Miles Fiberglass is a small family owned manufacturing company that was started by my father the year after he graduated from Benson Tech. We employ 70 people and now have two locations. We manufacture composite parts for wind blades, electric buses, railcars and RV industry.

I am passionate about education and the success of Oregon's system for many reasons. One reason is it affects so many Oregonians and their ability to prosper. From a business perspective, it is vital to our business. The success of our business is dependent on our employees, without them we will not be successful. Right now, we have 20 job openings ranging from \$11.25 to \$28.00 an hour plus bonuses and a generous benefit package. We have had such a hard time finding people who will show up to work and continue to work, that it is now our main focus. We don't look for experience, we have our own learn to earn in-house training program. We are looking for people who have the drive to learn, but first we have to find them or they have to find us. Most of the time they are unaware that there is a future in manufacturing at good paying jobs. Learning doesn't stop at our door, we pay for tuition at Clackamas Community College for anyone who wants to further their education.

The following are some examples of what we have done to fill this skills gap and actually I would call it "awareness gap" being aware of what opportunities are out there. Along with a handful of manufacturers we started a Manufacturing High School in Oregon City, this Charter school is focused on hands-on learning based around manufacturing. We offer internships, College Scholarships, financial support and tours. We are also involved in the Sabin Skill Center in Clackamas. With both of these schools we have made a roadster car, carbon fiber skateboards and canoes. It is fascinating to see how excited the students are to learn and build something. We have hired many of these students after they have graduated and they are some of our best and brightest employees. CAIS has proven to be a success for those students who are looking for

hands on learning. CAIS has a lower dropout rate than the average state dropout rate and higher scores on the state tests in English Language Arts, Math and Science than state averages. As a class of 37 graduates, they collectively earned over 1,500 college credits at CCC. Three students earned an Associate of Applied Science Degree, one in Manufacturing Technologies and two in Welding Technologies. The average amount of college credits per student was just over 40 credits.

I believe more Tech Schools should be available for those students who want the opportunity to have hands-on learning because we know not all students learn the same way. Businesses need to step up and take on some of the responsibility as well. They need to be willing to partner with schools and schools need to be willing to partner with business. We are truly all in this together and it is not one or the others fault. I am afraid with the existing problems with Oregon's financial situation more technical skills school will be unattainable. This should be a viable option for those students who are motivated to learn this way.

The stakes are too important to ignore, and business is excited to bring our voice to this important conversation.

Thank you for your time and your willingness to listen to the business community.

Lori Olud  
President  
Miles Fiberglass