

February 20, 2018

Dear Chair Williamson and members of the committee:

Associated General Contractors – Oregon Columbia Chapter represents a broad cross-section of the commercial construction industry, including open shop and union, rural and metro, highway and building contractors. We represent both general contractors and subcontractors.

To be clear, AGC is opposed to wage theft. Not only is it wrong, it creates a competitive disadvantage for contractors who are playing by the rules, doing the right thing, and paying their employees what they are owed.

Unfortunately, HB 4154A and the -A3 amendment does nothing to get at the real problem of wage theft. It simply shifts the liability and financial responsibility to the general contractor who has no direct relationship with the employees of the subcontractor (or the employees of a second-tier subcontractor—whom that subcontractor may retain).

AGC received the amendment currently before you late this morning and were first informed late last Friday afternoon that the amendment would be coming. A bill of this sweeping nature, scope, and complexity, that applies to all private construction work in the state of Oregon, demands a level of impact analysis that we simply have not had the time to conduct.

Finally, as mentioned in my testimony before the House Committee on Business & Labor, AGC and our industry has a long history of coming to the table, analyzing a problem, and coming up with solutions that solve the problem—once it has been clearly identified.

To date, there has been little or no engagement of our association, or similarly situated contractors, on the underlying bill or the amendments.

Unfortunately, HB 4154A and the -A3 amendment are not the product of interim discussion that is so crucial to finding real solutions to issues such as wage theft (someone simply not being paid) or disputed wage claims where BOLI gets involved to make a determination.

For these reasons, AGC strongly opposes the passage of this bill.

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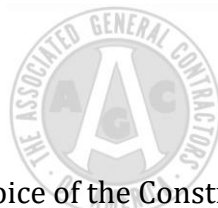
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