



Plumbing and Mechanical
Contractors Association



UA Plumbers and
Steamfitters Local #290

Submitted 3/30/19 by:
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TO: Joint Ways & Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

RE: Support for BOLI Budget and Additional Staffing

On behalf of the Plumbing Mechanical Contractors Association (PMCA) and UA Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 290, we urge your support of SB 5516 - BOLI's Budget and request for additional staff resources and website modernization.

PMCA represents 175 plumbing and mechanical contractors throughout Oregon, Southwest Washington, and the northernmost counties in California. UA Local 290 represents over 3,000 highly skilled Plumbers, Steamfitters and HVAC/R Technicians who work for PMCA contractors. Together, we jointly fund and manage a 5-year apprenticeship program, registered with BOLI, that is currently training over 500 apprentices.

As employers and workers, we depend on BOLI as both a technical resources and enforcement agency.

Over the years, we have seen significant reductions at BOLI, despite an increasing population and workforce in Oregon. We support Commissioner Hoyle's request for additional staff to provide more apprenticeship support services, speed processing of wage claims and public records requests and provide technical assistance to employers. We also support updating the website to make it more accessible. We believe these investments are modest, considering significant reductions in agency staffing over the past three decades.

We urge your support on these investments – our apprentices are served by BOLI's role in supporting pre-apprenticeship programs, which help ensure new apprentices are prepared to succeed in our training programs; workers are served by timely wage claim processing, which needs to get wages owed to workers back in their pockets as fast as possible; our employers are served by the Technical Assistance for Employers Unit, which helps them understand and comply with the law; and the public is served by timely processing of public records. These are all areas where we support an increased investment and staff services.

It's time to reverse the trend of downsizing such a critical agency and make these investments for the sake of Oregon's workers and employers.