

Testimony of _____
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 48
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education
April 18, 2019

Co-Chairs Frederick and McClain and Members of the Committee.

My name is Wayne Chow . I am the President of IBEW Local 48 based in Portland, Oregon. Our organization represents over 5000 members who work in a wide variety of fields, including inside electrical construction, telecommunications, broadcasting, electrical manufacturing, maintenance, and marine.

Our union has long relied on the educational, research, and consultation services provided by the Labor Education and Research Center at the University of Oregon. A few years ago, at the request of apprenticeship directors from our union and IBEW Local 280, LERC faculty developed a three-module supplement to our training program that traced the unique history of our craft and helped apprentices learn about their roles and responsibilities as members of our organization. We have regularly sent dozens of our apprentices to an annual weekend summer program offered by LERC. This program exposes our emerging leaders to a broad-based curriculum and helps them think about becoming more involved in their communities. Our union has a long commitment to civic engagement and community involvement, and LERC has helped prepare our apprentices and emerging leaders to take these obligations seriously. Also, LERC has conducted customized workshops for our members on labor law, conflict resolution, and collective bargaining and provided training for our staff representatives that has enhanced their effectiveness. I should also add that exposure to LERC training has encouraged some of

our members to pursue college degrees and other ambitions for career and professional developments. When LERC says that it has educated generations of union leaders in the state of Oregon, my organization can attest fully to the truth of this statement! Because I am one of THEM.

We also deeply appreciate LERC's research and consultation regarding our apprenticeship programs. LERC has worked with us and other partners in our ongoing effort to open our ranks to women and people of color and develop recruitment and retention strategies to diversify our membership. Also, its careful research on apprenticeship, labor standards, and occupational safety allows us to advocate more effectively for our shared goals of infrastructure improvement, quality jobs, and our code of excellence that will lead to a more productive, high quality and safety-conscious workforce. With the addition of new faculty in its Portland office, we anticipate working even more closely with LERC in the future on projects of mutual interest.

IBEW 48 regards LERC as an invaluable partner who has proven its worth to us for many decades. It represents a unique space within the university system where the voices, needs, and concerns of workers are heard and addressed. We urge you to maintain your investment in this program that for a small amount of money delivers so much in return.