



A STRONG VOICE FOR OREGON'S WORKERS

TO: Chair Riley
Vice-Chair Hansell
Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Business

FR: Jacob Finkelman, OR AFL-CIO

RE: SB 420 Support

March 16, 2021

The Oregon AFL-CIO represents 300,000 workers across sectors in Oregon and is a voice for all workers in the legislative process. It's critical that Oregon support and enable the training and development of a skilled and diverse workforce with high-road labor standards which is why we strongly support Senate Bill 420 and the positive impacts it can provide for working people and communities throughout the state.

Following a similar program developed in Lane County, SB 420 establishes a new optional tool that local governments can voluntarily utilize to promote workforce and community development on public construction projects in their jurisdictions. SB 420 creates a framework to help localities develop meaningful bidding requirements and standards, while allowing broad flexibility to shape their programs to their community's unique needs. As a permissive bill, it doesn't force any locality to adopt a program if it doesn't fit their region or area.

The ability to develop and adopt the community benefit model where it works for local communities is imperative to the continued use of public funds to support workforce and economic development. This will help ensure that any individual who wants to pursue a career in construction can have better access to contractors registered to provide on the job training, regardless of their geographic area. Equity and access across the state and for currently and historically marginalized communities and contractors is important for development in Oregon. SB 420 allows local governments to help support these values on their public improvement contracts.

Providing a voluntary framework for localities to set certain requirements on their public projects will continue to advance opportunities for workers, businesses, and communities across Oregon. We urge your support of SB 420.