



April 1, 2021

Senate Committee on Education
900 Court Street NE, Room 453
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Dembrow and Committee Members:

Rogue Valley Mentoring supports SB623 because:

- The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in the steepest economic downturn since the Great Depression. And the major impacts from wildfire disaster has added even greater economic suffering.
- Over 130,000 Oregonians are still unemployed and the most severely impacted are less educated, low-wage individuals - especially women, communities of color, and younger workers.
- This circumstance of crisis has revealed serious flaws in the systems intended to serve and support Oregonians during difficult times.

SB 623:

- Leverages and aligns existing resources, programs, services, and relationships to ensure people and businesses have access to the broadest array of available resources and services.
- Empowers the legislature and our communities as partners in implementing equitable, effective approaches to state-funded workforce development programs.
- Emphasizes the need to inform program design and delivery at the local level and provides the structure to "meet people where they are."
- Offers a comprehensive, holistic approach that brings multiple systems and partners together and promotes collective action.
- Provides a mechanism to identify and scale best practices, understand system shortcomings, and fill service and resource gaps.
- Please pass this legislation as soon as possible, so we can provide help and resources to individuals in our community.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Kreisman", is written over a horizontal line.

Sarah Kreisman
Executive Director
Rogue Valley Mentoring