



April 5, 2021

Senate Education Committee

Re: SB 623

VIA Electronic Submission on OLIS

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Thomsen & Members of the Committee:

As you know, Washington County was one of the few jurisdictions in Oregon to receive a direct disbursement of money from the Coronavirus Relief Fund. The Washington County Board of Commissioners prioritized the funds to assist the county community in a number of ways, including in investing in our local economy because of the huge impact the virus and the response to the virus were having on our businesses. The Washington County Board of Commissioners included investment in workforce redevelopment as part of that allocation of funds. This was in recognition that as we saw long-term impacts to the economy many people would not be able to return to their previous job and that some sectors remained opportunities for better income and career paths.

To provide this educational opportunity, the county turned to our local workforce board, Worksystems. Because of their expertise and their knowledge of the partnerships in the county, they were able to provide assistance to individuals who are working towards education, training or certification goals. The workforce board's ability to tap community partners and work swiftly to put together a program to address this obvious need proved vital.

SB 623 similarly places the opportunity into local hands about how to address the ongoing workforce development needs to respond the continue crisis. Our local partnerships are prepared to react quickly and with local knowledge. SB 623 aligns State and local goals and objectives, increases transparency and accountability of public workforce investments, improves community engagement and responsiveness to local needs, and supports positive systemic change.

Workforce development is key component for Washington County's economic resilience and therefore a priority for the Washington County Board. SB 623 supports our shared goals and therefore we urge your support.

Sincerely,

Erin Doyle
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