



Chairs Beyer and Gomberg, members of the Joint Ways and Means Committee on Transportation and Economic Development,

My name is Dan Torres and I am a political coordinator with Oregon AFSCME Council 75. Oregon AFSCME represents workers in many state agencies including the folks at the Building Codes Division. The building codes division is responsible for the statewide enforcement and application of the state's building codes. In addition to providing guidance, hearing disputes and ensuring compliance, the Building Codes also acts as back up and extra support to local jurisdictions who need extra capacity or support.

I am submitting testimony today in support of the work the division does and asks that they be given flexibility and support to continue this important work across the state. Our state building codes affect almost every aspect of our public life. From the public buildings we gather in safe social distances, to our own homes where many of us have spent so much increased time this last year. Ensuring that the building codes are accurate, up to standard and enforced ensures that Oregonian's have the piece of mind the building they are in has a base level of safety. Additionally the division is responsible for licensing of select trades which represents skilled workers and jobs in the state. In electrical alone they help manage over 60,000 individual licences.

The uniqueness of the Building Codes Division is that all monies collected for the enforcement of building codes statutorily can only go towards the enforcement of building codes. The division for a long time had been losing positions or cutting back staff for a variety of reasons including economic factors and the ups and downs of the construction industry. In more recent budgets, a handful of positions have been added to the division which allows it to provide additional services with faster response across the state. We ask that the BCD budget within DCBS continue to be fully supported and be given the flexibility to ensure they can continue their important work.

Thank you in advance for reading my testimony today and your consideration to keep BCD whole if not invest more in their positioning to continue their work.

Dan Torres

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