

Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
Subcommittee on Education  
Oregon Legislative Assembly

May 14, 2023

Dear Co-Chairs McLain and Frederick and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education,

Thank you for the opportunity to answer questions posed during the public universities' Apprenticeship Report presentation to your committee on May 8, 2023.

Senator Dembrow asked where apprentices come from to work on university capital projects. The universities do not track the region, city, ZIP code, or other geographical data for workers and apprentices involved in projects, so we cannot directly answer the question. That said, each university project included in the 2023 Apprenticeship Report included subcontractors based locally and in the Portland Metropolitan Area. We appreciate the senator's remarks on the difficulty for higher education institutions outside of the Willamette Valley to find apprentices, particularly women, veterans, and people of color. We agree with the senator's comments and look forward to a continued conversation about ways to support construction projects at universities, and increasing and diversifying the construction workforce in rural areas of the state.

Senator Frederick asked for a more detailed breakdown of the "minority individual" category for projects included in the apprenticeship report. As included in the presentation, minority individuals working through qualifying contracts or subcontracts completed between 9.8% and 36.2% of total project work hours. When collecting this data, the universities required contractors to track work hours using the definition of "minority individual" found in ORS 200.005, rather than more specific racial or ethnic categories. Due to this tracking method, we cannot provide the exact information requested by the senator.

Senator Frederick also asked for a demographic breakdown of workers involved in contracts related to the design and planning of projects included in the apprenticeship report. The universities do not have information on the demographics of contractors or architects engaged in the design phase. That said, many architects involved in design work have internal or external commitments for actively involving small, disadvantaged, minority- or woman-owned businesses. For example, at Portland State University's request, the architect engaged in the Vernier Science Center project, Bora Architecture & Interiors, has committed to have at least 20% of its contract value go to firms that are MWESB certified (Minority-Owned, Women-Owned, or Emerging Small Business). To date, 30% of the contract value has gone to MWESB certified firms.

Please let us know if you have any other questions.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Dana Richardson  
Executive Director  
Oregon Council of Presidents