



March 8, 2023

TO: Members of the Joint Subcommittee on Ways and Means on Transportation and Economic Development

FR: Derek Sangston, Oregon Business & Industry

RE: Support for SB 5515

Co-Chair Woods, Co-Chair Gomberg, members of the Joint Subcommittee on Ways and Means on Transportation and Economic Development.

Oregon Business & Industry (OBI) is a statewide association representing businesses from a wide variety of industries and from each of Oregon's 36 counties. In addition to being the statewide chamber of commerce, OBI is the state affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Retail Federation. Our 1,600 member companies, more than 80% of which are small businesses, employ more than 250,000 Oregonians. Oregon's private sector businesses help drive a healthy, prosperous economy for the benefit of everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the Bureau of Labor and Industries' (BOLI) biannual budget found in SB 5515. A functioning agency, including enforcement, is essential to Oregon businesses. As conscientious employers, OBI's members support the efforts of the agency to hold wrongdoers responsible and ensure workers' rights are protected. OBI appreciates the work the agency has done in recent years to take a balanced approach to improve services to both employers and employees.

Some of the important requests in this budget include funding for two investigator positions, which BOLI will add to a pilot program that has helped resolve more than 200 cases over an 18 month period, position authority to add two positions to the bureau's Wage and Hour Division, which will help them address these time sensitive claims, and funding for ODOT's workforce development program, which will help leverage federal funds to help develop Oregon's workforce. Oregon employers have faced the challenge of implementing many new and complex employment laws over the past several sessions. BOLI provides an essential resource for employers by providing guidance about these laws and clarifying employer obligations.

BOLI's budget request will help the agency continue to provide that assistance to employers. OBI urges your support of SB 5515. Thank you for your consideration.

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