



**Testimony on HB 3306**  
House Committee on Business and Labor  
March 15, 2023

Chair Holvey, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Sosa, and members of the Committee. My name is Jennifer Purcell and I am the Director of Future Ready Oregon at the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 3306.

The bill amends requirements around paid work experience opportunities that are funded with Future Ready Oregon Prosperity 10,000 or Workforce Ready Grants. This requirement applies to grants entered into after the effective date of the act. The Commission shares the view that Oregonians in these programs deserve fair wages for their work, even as they acquire skills to advance their career prospects.

If adopted, and to gauge compliance with these requirements, the Commission will have to determine the average wage for hundreds of job titles over multiple localities. While we are confident that we can work with other state partners to determine wage figures in many instances, this work will require agency resources, both ours and others, to achieve.

As this requirement relates to Prosperity 10,000 grants, the Commission expects most, if not all, of available funds for this program to be obligated prior to the effective date of the bill, which potentially moots this requirement for this program.

Additionally, the Commission expects that the adoption of this requirement will cause some potential applicants to not participate in Future Ready Oregon programs because their business conditions do not support paying average locality wage rates to worker-trainees while those workers are acquiring skills. As proposed, individuals who are participating in paid work experience would receive the average wage, as opposed to an entry level wage, where the average area wages include wages paid to individuals who are new to the workforce as well as those who have been in the occupation for decades. While we have no position on the wage question and will work to support that legislative goal if adopted, we must observe that the adoption of this requirement may lead to a reduction in the number of trainees that grantee partners can commit to serving.

Section 4 amends the reporting requirements to include additional information by priority population. Labor force participation data is not available for all priority populations, and so,

HECC recommends that all required reporting be disaggregated by race, age, gender, and geographical area. Additionally, we currently do not have labor force participation rates, even at a statewide level, for the manufacturing or health care sectors. We appreciate the opportunity to work with the chair on amendments that can enhance the reporting requirements using data that the Commission can more readily obtain or calculate.

Thank you for your time today.