

National Hispanic Construction Alliance

Dear House Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 4050, a crucial piece of legislation designed to empower Oregon's public and private employers to effectively invest in and bolster our state's workforce. As we navigate through a persistent workforce shortage, a challenge that is not unique to Oregon but felt nationwide, it is imperative that we take decisive action to ensure our state remains competitive and capable of meeting the demands of the modern economy.

HB 4050 seeks to provide Oregon employers with the necessary flexibility to compete with out-of-state employers while still upholding the robust protections under Oregon's Pay Equity Act. By adopting language used by other states with strong pay equity protections. This is particularly critical as projections indicate a looming "forever" workforce shortage, with fewer individuals participating in the workforce by the end of this decade.

The bill thoughtfully addresses the need for balance by allowing for a pay differential when it does not discriminate based on protected classes, aligns with a business necessity, and fulfills the underlying purpose of that necessity. Moreover, it preserves the rights of workers by allowing them to file a complaint if they believe the business necessity could have been addressed without creating a pay differential, thus maintaining Oregon's strong stance against pay discrimination.

It is also important to recognize that HB 4050 is not just about maintaining competitiveness; it is about laying the groundwork for Oregon's future. The bill complements the Legislature's planned investments in critical areas such as behavioral health and housing. Without the flexibility that HB 4050 offers, our state's employers will face significant challenges in recruiting and retaining the workforce needed to support these vital sectors, from construction, healthcare to law enforcement and beyond.

I urge you to support HB 4050. This bill is not merely a response to the current workforce challenges; it is a forward-thinking approach to ensuring that Oregon remains a competitive, vibrant, and attractive state for businesses and workers alike. Let us take this step to secure a prosperous future for all Oregonians.

Sincerely,



George Carrillo
Chief Financial Officer
National Hispanic Construction Association