

HB 2539 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development

Prepared By: Ellen O'Brien, LPRO Analyst

Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to develop a plan for community colleges to offer an associate's degree in coordination with any apprenticeship or training program that is at least four years in length and registered with the State Apprenticeship and Training Council. It establishes elements of the plan and requires HECC to submit a report containing the plan to the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2026. The measure declares an emergency and takes effect on passage.

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon State Apprenticeship and Training Council (OSATC) is the Governor-appointed body tasked with approving new apprenticeship programs and policies. The Bureau of Labor and Industry (BOLI) provides staff support to OSATC.

The length of apprenticeships is measured in terms of the number of hours of on-the-job training (OJT), with 2000 hours considered equivalent to one year. According to data from BOLI, there are 286 approved apprenticeship standards in Oregon. Out of those 286 standards, 120 programs in 45 occupations are at least 8000 hours, or four years, in length. A significant number of these programs are in occupations such as manufacturing plant electrician, inside electrician, and millwright. Other eligible occupations would include carpenter, plumber, industrial welder, machinist, and sheet metal worker.

Occupations with registered apprenticeships shorter than four years include dental assistant, certified nursing assistant, fire fighter, behavioral counselor, or bus and truck mechanic.

The 2023-25 Senate Interim Committee on Labor and Business heard a presentation on registered apprenticeships on [December 10, 2024](#). [BOLI's presentation](#) outlined the standards approval process and the requirements for OJT, as well as the requirement for each registered apprenticeship to include 144 hours of related training per year.