

Requested by Representative OWENS

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO  
HOUSE BILL 3634**

1 On page 1 of the printed bill, delete lines 4 through 26 and delete pages  
2 2 and 3 and insert:

3 **“SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section:**

4 **“(a) ‘Environmental justice community’ has the meaning given that**  
5 **term in ORS 182.535.**

6 **“(b) ‘Nonprofit organization means an organization that is de-**  
7 **scribed in section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and that is**  
8 **exempt from income tax under section 501(a) of the Internal Revenue**  
9 **Code.**

10 **“(2) The Water Workforce Program is established in the Higher**  
11 **Education Coordinating Commission to increase and diversify the**  
12 **supply of skilled water professionals within the water workforce**  
13 **through workforce development initiatives that include, but are not**  
14 **limited to, providing education and training opportunities to individ-**  
15 **uals seeking entry into the following sectors:**

16 **“(a) Water and wastewater utilities and related industries.**

17 **“(b) Water science, engineering and technology.**

18 **“(3) The commission shall oversee, and local workforce development**  
19 **boards as defined in ORS 660.300 shall implement, the program. The**  
20 **commission shall provide grants to local workforce development**  
21 **boards to administer the program for the following purposes:**

1       “(a) To identify and address solutions, at the state and regional  
2 level, for eliminating barriers to and leveraging opportunities for de-  
3 veloping and sustaining pathways that connect individuals to career  
4 opportunities within the water workforce, with particular focus on the  
5 sectors described under subsection (2) of this section, by examining  
6 factors that include, but are not limited to:

7       “(A) Current education and training pathways for individuals to  
8 enter the water workforce;

9       “(B) Opportunities for building partnerships and sharing resources  
10 between water and wastewater utilities and other industries experi-  
11 encing a shortage of skilled water professionals;

12       “(C) The barriers encountered by individuals seeking entry into the  
13 water workforce and the opportunities to address those barriers;

14       “(D) The barriers encountered by industries experiencing a shortage  
15 of skilled water professionals and the opportunities to address those  
16 barriers; and

17       “(E) Other factors deemed relevant by the local workforce develop-  
18 ment boards.

19       “(b) To develop regionally specific strategies for addressing water  
20 workforce needs, with a focus on the water and wastewater utilities  
21 sector.

22       “(c) To provide funding to nonprofit organizations, high schools,  
23 community colleges, public universities and other entities for the de-  
24 velopment and operation of water and wastewater utilities training,  
25 education and apprenticeship programs that are designed to do the  
26 following:

27       “(A) Provide paid on-the-job career and education pathways for ob-  
28 taining operator certifications for water and wastewater systems;

29       “(B) Engage with water and wastewater utilities to explore and  
30 identify potential options to provide financial support to on-the-job

1 **career and education pathways for individuals to obtain employment**  
2 **in the water and wastewater utilities sector;**

3 **“(C) Facilitate partnerships with water and wastewater utilities ex-**  
4 **periencing skilled workforce shortages to provide job placement ser-**  
5 **vices to program participants; and**

6 **“(D) Identify potential sources for sustainable funding to support**  
7 **the programs.**

8 **“(d) To partner with nonprofit organizations that serve environ-**  
9 **mental justice communities to conduct targeted outreach to such**  
10 **communities, promoting awareness of career opportunities within the**  
11 **water workforce, with a focus on the water and wastewater utilities**  
12 **sector. Priority shall be given to organizations that have demonstrated**  
13 **knowledge and experience with and an established connection to water**  
14 **and wastewater utilities.**

15 **“(e) To identify and implement strategies to attract, recruit, retain**  
16 **and replace water and wastewater utility operators and support suc-**  
17 **cession planning in rural, coastal and remote communities and com-**  
18 **munities with limited funding and workforce capacity.**

19 **“(f) To coordinate with state workforce agencies and regional**  
20 **workforce development partners to expand community-based partner-**  
21 **ships that aim to support and sustain water workforce development**  
22 **initiatives.**

23 **“(g) To develop education and training pathways within the water**  
24 **workforce, including but not limited to:**

25 **“(A) Apprenticeship opportunities; and**

26 **“(B) Opportunities that provide paid work experience, including**  
27 **stipends and wages.**

28 **“(h) To provide wraparound supports and services necessary to fa-**  
29 **cilitate engagement in the water workforce, including but not limited**  
30 **to tuition assistance and fee assistance to obtain industry-recognized**

1 **certificates.**

2 **“(i) To engage and coordinate with federally recognized tribal gov-**  
3 **ernments in this state to assess and address the water and wastewater**  
4 **utilities needs of federally recognized Indian tribes in Oregon.**

5 **“(j) To fund organizational investments, including but not limited**  
6 **to:**

7 **“(A) Hiring staff;**

8 **“(B) Purchasing equipment, technology and other training-related**  
9 **supplies; and**

10 **“(C) Covering administrative costs.**

11 **“(4) Prior to distributing any grant funds to a local workforce de-**  
12 **velopment board under this section, the commission and the local**  
13 **workforce development board shall enter into an agreement:**

14 **“(a) Indicating the purposes for which the funds may be used; and**

15 **“(b) Requiring the local workforce development board to report on**  
16 **the use of funds in a manner described by the commission.**

17 **“(5) A local workforce development board receiving a grant under**  
18 **this section may distribute grant funds to subgrantees that are:**

19 **“(a) Nonprofit organizations that partner with the local workforce**  
20 **development board to carry out the targeted outreach described in**  
21 **subsection (3)(d) of this section.**

22 **“(b) Entities that partner with the local workforce development**  
23 **board to develop and operate programs described in subsection (3)(c)**  
24 **of this section, with priority given to those entities that operate es-**  
25 **tablished programs that meet the criteria described under subsection**  
26 **(3)(c)(A) to (D) of this section.**

27 **“(c) Entities that partner with local workforce development boards**  
28 **to carry out the activities described under subsection (3) of this sec-**  
29 **tion.**

30 **“(6) No later than September 15 of each even-numbered year, the**

1 Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall submit a report to  
2 the interim committees of the Legislative Assembly relating to labor  
3 and business, in the manner provided in ORS 192.254, on the outcomes  
4 of the Water Workforce Program, including information reported by  
5 a grant recipient, and any recommendations for legislation.

6 “(7) The commission may adopt rules necessary to carry out the  
7 provisions of this section.

8 “SECTION 2. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropri-  
9 ation, there is appropriated to the Higher Education Coordinating  
10 Commission, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, out of the Gen-  
11 eral Fund, the amount of \$3,500,000, to be distributed to local  
12 workforce development boards for the purposes described under sec-  
13 tion 1 of this 2025 Act.

14 “SECTION 3. (1) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission  
15 and local workforce development boards shall consult with the fol-  
16 lowing entities to establish a process and criteria for distributing  
17 available moneys from funds appropriated to the commission to  
18 subgrantees and entities that participate in carrying out the activities  
19 described in section 1 of this 2025 Act:

20 “(a) Entities that are currently providing education and training  
21 pathways for entry into the water workforce.

22 “(b) Industries in need of skilled water professionals, with a focus  
23 on industries within the water and wastewater utilities sector.

24 “(2) The commission and the local workforce development boards  
25 shall establish the process and criteria not later than the date that is  
26 six months after the effective date of this 2025 Act.

27 “SECTION 4. The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall  
28 submit the first report required under section 1 (6) of this 2025 Act no  
29 later than September 15, 2026.

30 “SECTION 5. This 2025 Act being necessary for the immediate

1 **preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is**  
2 **declared to exist, and this 2025 Act takes effect on its passage.”.**

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