



# Columbia Pacific Building and Construction Trades Council

February 27, 2025

Co-Chairs Woods and Gomberg, and Members of the Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development,

The Columbia Pacific Building & Construction Trades Council represents more than 20,000 workers and 22 local Building and Construction Trades Unions in the Portland Metropolitan and Southwest Washington areas. We are writing to you today to urge your support for the BOLI funding measure HB5015. We have all seen what has been happening to federal government workers in the last month, which shows the need that now more than ever, workers need all the support and protections possible from agencies as well as organized labor.

From 2020 through 2024, BOLI experienced a 208% increase in wage claims alone. From an independent study conducted by Rutgers University they found an estimated 88,000 to 128,000 Oregon workers are paid below minimum wage. This is not only unfair to workers, but also to high road employers who are working within the guidelines correctly. Over the last 4-5 decades BOLI has been consistently underfunded and cut back staff while the workforce has steadily increased. In the 1970s and 1980s, BOLI had 214 full-time staff to serve 1.2 million workers. As of 2024, BOLI's staffing level was at 157 full-time staff to serve 2.1 million workers, which is almost double the workforce.

The solution to these problems is simple. Your support to fully fund BOLI through HB5015 will help provide a level playing field for good employers that will be profitable as well as benefit all communities while treating workers with dignity and respect they deserve.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Randall Friesen  
Executive Secretary-Treasurer  
Columbia Pacific Building & Construction Trades Council