



Oregon House of Representatives
Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development.
900 Court St. NE, H-484
Salem, Oregon 97301

Chair Hudson, Vice Chair Fragala, Vice Chair Harbick, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Hampton Lumber, I urge the Oregon Legislature to support HB 3552 to allocate a new **\$156.4 million** to support the creation and operation of **Regional Career Centers (RCCs)** for the 2025-27 school year.

Hampton Lumber is a fourth-generation, family-owned wood products company headquartered in Portland, OR. We have three sawmills in Northwest Oregon in the communities of Willamina, Tillamook, and Warrenton. We also operate two advanced wood manufacturing facilities through our affiliate, RedBuilt in Stayton and Hillsboro. The Willamina sawmill was our first mill, purchased by the family in 1942. Over the past 83 years, we have invested in the mill, our people and the community. Just this year, we completed a major rebuild of the Willamina mill, which we believe will make the facility competitive for decades to come.

As a key forest products employer in our region, we know there are fantastic career opportunities available for young people, particularly in the trades and technical fields. Having a local CTE center would greatly improve access to these opportunities. As such, **we were thrilled to be able to demonstrate strong support for Sheridan School District's Career Technical Education Center (CTEC) with a \$1 million contribution to the project in 2024.** We recognize that developing a skilled local workforce is crucial for sustaining both their operations and our rural economy. Our investment reflects the critical need for technical training programs that will prepare students for high-demand careers in our region's industries.

Sheridan School District has already begun work on the CTEC, which would serve multiple rural districts with technical skills training in the areas of Diesel Mechanics & Truck Driving, Agribusiness, Fire Science/EMT and Manufacturing. The site has been purchased and facilities have been designed with input from various local business representatives. Sheridan's Barbara Roberts CTEC project is shovel-ready, and currently waiting only for the funding necessary to begin the next steps of the project. **Allocation of funds from HB 3352 would allow Phase I to move forward**, and ensure our first two pathways, Diesel Mechanics & Truck Driving, as well as Fire Science/EMT could begin serving students as soon as initial construction is complete.

Indeed, the funding for RCCs will allow for the development, construction, and remodeling of facilities to increase capacity and access to CTE statewide. ESDs will lead planning processes to ensure RCCs are tailored to meet local workforce and student needs. Funding for RCCs will provide advanced career development opportunities and build school-to-career pathways by coordinating internships, apprenticeships, and work-based learning opportunities with local businesses. Additionally, it will support the hiring of qualified educators and staff to deliver instruction directly to regional schools.

We believe in the transformative impact of Regional Career Centers and the opportunities they provide for students in our communities. **We respectfully ask for your support in funding \$156.4 million** to establish and operate RCCs and address Oregon's growing workforce demands.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kristin Rasmussen', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Kristin Rasmussen
Director of Public Affairs & Communications
Hampton Lumber

Cc

Representative McIntire
Representative Elmer
Representative Wright