



Our mission is to coordinate a regional workforce system that supports individual prosperity and business competitiveness.

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To the Senate Committee on Commerce and General Government

RE: Support SB 1512 – Prosperity Programs

Chair Meek and members of the Committee,

On behalf of Worksystems, the local workforce development board serving the City of Portland, Multnomah and Washington Counties, I am writing in strong support of SB 1512: Prosperity Programs. When Oregon invests in jobs, it strengthens families, communities, and our statewide economy. Prosperity Programs build on the success of Prosperity 10,000 (P10K), which has served 9,285 Oregonians to date and delivered strong, measurable outcomes. With current funding set to expire on June 30, 2026, renewed investment is essential to protect this proven infrastructure.

Prosperity Programs are a revenue-generating strategy, not an expense. Oregon's original \$35 million investment in P10K generated a \$149.1 million return on investment over two years—nearly \$3 returned for every \$1 invested—while increasing tax revenue and reducing reliance on public assistance. Participants earn average wages of \$22.73 per hour, with most working full time and earning more than Oregon's Self-Sufficiency Standard.

These outcomes are possible because Prosperity Programs focus on lasting employment, not quick placements. By aligning training with real employer needs and providing critical wraparound supports—such as tuition assistance, career coaching, and barrier-removal services—participants can complete training and successfully transition into family-wage jobs. Local workforce boards like Worksystems tailor these services to community needs, ensuring the program works for a variety of workers and employers.

The impact of this investment is best illustrated through the people it has helped. One participant, Desiree, was unable to work for months after a serious injury. Thanks to Prosperity Programs, she received a scholarship for a healthcare training program and was able to reskill during a time of financial uncertainty. As Desiree shared, "This program helped me during a time of uncertainty. Many people are struggling to find a career, and the option to reskill is invaluable. It gave me hope, and I want that for others."

We also heard from a participant who was questioning if he was capable of returning to work after completing an addiction recovery program. He received a scholarship to earn his Class A license and currently works for Union Pacific Railroad as a conductor. He shared, "Funding for Prosperity Programs must continue, because these programs change lives. I was lost, and I no longer saw myself as a contributing member of society. Without these programs, I would still be struggling. Now, I'm an active participant in my community—doing volunteer work, supporting others in recovery, paying taxes, and no longer relying on the state for medical bills or food assistance."

These stories are common across our region—participants overcoming injury, language barriers, mental health challenges, or recovery and moving into high-demand careers where they can support themselves, contribute to their communities, and meet the needs of local employers.

SB 1512 strengthens and extends this proven approach by expanding access, setting clear benchmarks for employment outcomes, and ensuring fair wages and high-quality training. With federal workforce dollars declining, Prosperity Programs are one of Oregon's most effective tools for building a resilient, competitive workforce.

We urge your support for SB 1512 and continued investment in Prosperity Programs that deliver real results for Oregonians and our economy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Paulson", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

James Paulson
Owner, JMPDX, LLC
Worksystems Board Chair