

February 25, 2026

**Support for Senate Bill 1501**

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Starr, and Members of the Committee:

I urge your support for SB 1501 to champion family-sustaining jobs in the skilled trades. This \$600 million renovation project is about more than basketball; it's about ensuring our statewide construction workforce is shored up for years to come.

SB 1501 is important to me as a IBEW Local 659 union electrician. A project of this scale would allow us to increase enrollment in state-registered apprenticeship programs. These programs rely on the certainty of future jobs in order to move potential apprentices off waiting lists and into Oregon's skilled trades workforce.

When this project breaks ground in 2027, skilled trades workers will come from all over Oregon to work on this once-in-a-generation job site. From apprentices who earn while they learn to journey workers training the next generation, our workforce stands ready to meet this moment.

Please pass SB 1501 to take the first step toward making this project a reality. This is a vital investment in job creation, workforce development, working families, and the entire Oregon economy.

Thank you.

Johnny Walker