

Submitter: Benjamin Roche
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1566

Chair and Members of the Committee,

I support SB 1566 because it restores practical balance between protecting wages and allowing affordable housing projects to be built.

For over 30 years I have worked in the factory-built housing industry. Our homes are constructed in regulated production facilities by skilled tradespeople. Installation and on-site work are performed by licensed, bonded, and certified contractors. These are already professional, regulated construction environments.

Recent prevailing wage interpretations have treated affordable housing projects like large public works, even when the project is primarily private housing supported by layered financing tools. This has resulted in projects being delayed, redesigned, or abandoned. In many cases, the added labor classification requirements do not reflect how factory-built housing is actually produced and installed.

SB 1566 correctly recognizes that residential affordable housing is not the same as heavy civil or large commercial public works. The bill:

- Allows affordable housing projects to move forward
- Preserves wage protections where true public works are involved
- Includes site work, utilities, and installation as part of residential construction
- Clarifies that common affordable housing financing tools should not automatically trigger prevailing wage

This bill does not undermine labor. It prevents misapplication of rules that were never designed for factory-built housing and small-scale residential development.

If Oregon is serious about increasing housing supply and keeping homes attainable for working families and seniors, SB 1566 is a necessary correction.

I urge your support.