



May 7, 2025

**Re: Support for SB 426**

Chair Grayber, Vice-Chairs Elmer and Muñoz, and Members of the House Labor and Workplace Standards Committee:

My name is Hayley Watson and I'm submitting this testimony on behalf of the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council.

The Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council is a statewide umbrella organization that includes 6 Regional Councils, 31 affiliated member Unions, and represents tens of thousands of skilled trades workers throughout all of Oregon.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 426, which strengthens protections for construction workers in Oregon by holding market participants accountable for wage theft at every stage of contracting. We do not see this issue as Union or non-Union, but as an issue of respect for the dignity of all hardworking Oregonians.

Wage theft doesn't just hurt workers—it weakens Oregon's economy. As we see the increased need for skilled construction workers across our state, it has never been more important that we maintain high standards for the enforcement of wage laws and protect Oregon's workers. The prevalent wage theft and labor exploitation within the construction industry drags down wages and hurts our communities.

Our Council has expressed strong support for fully funding the Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) but despite their enforcement actions, wage theft persists. BOLI has been forced to limit its investigations due to their budget constraints and limited capacity but even if fully funded, they cannot and should not be the only option workers have.

By holding bad actors accountable, we believe that SB 426 tackles a major cause of wage theft, ensures accountability, encourages compliance with labor laws, and strengthens protections for workers.

In conclusion, we believe that all of Oregon's workers deserve to be paid the wages they are owed and the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council urges you to support SB 426.

Thank you for your time.