



May 7, 2025

Chair Dacia Grayber
House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Grayber, Vice Chairs Elmer and Munoz, and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Bend Chamber, which serves 1,750 members and 8,500 businesses in our local community, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments related to SB 426. At this juncture, the Bend Chamber is opposed to SB 426 as it has significant negative consequences for our construction and development industries.

The bill currently written claims to solve wage theft in construction but instead shifts liability from bad actors to unknowing contractors and property owners without allowing contractors to mitigate their risk through contract. This bill is harmful for the construction industry and businesses in Oregon, and will not actually get bad actors out of the system; it will:

- Hurt Small Businesses by making property owners liable for wages from construction projects on their property, regardless of their knowledge of the wage payment.
- Hurt Independent Contractors by discouraging contractors from hiring independent contractors, since contractors will be concerned about being liable for a misclassification issue.
- Hurt Minority and Small Contractors by discouraging contractors from hiring emerging and minority subcontractors due to increased financial risk.

We strongly oppose wage theft and its harmful effects on workers and families. We urge the committee to focus on proactive measures to reduce the backlog of wage theft claims at BOLI. However, SB 426A punishes the wrong people, and we respectfully request a NO vote.

Sincerely,

Sara Odendahl
Director of Government Affairs & Strategic Initiatives
Bend Chamber of Commerce