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**BOLI Budget Targets Delayed Justice
and Invests in Job Training for the Future**

Salem, Ore. — Today, the Oregon House of Representatives advanced a budget for the Oregon Bureau of Labor & Industries (BOLI) that clears the path for faster justice for workers, cuts through case backlogs, and expands apprenticeship opportunities across Oregon.

At a time when demand for enforcement and employer assistance is rising, BOLI's budget meets the moment by aligning funding with the state's legal responsibilities and public expectations. The budget is bolstered by one-time dedicated resources from the Workers' Benefit Fund to tackle long-standing delays in resolving wage theft claims.

"When workers file complaints about unpaid wages or civil rights violations, they deserve timely justice," said **Rep. David Gomberg** (D-Otis), co-chair of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development. "This budget finally gives BOLI the tools to begin digging out from under a years-long backlog and to rebuild public trust in enforcement."

For years, BOLI has faced growing demand without staffing increases. The result has been a backlog of thousands of wage claims and civil rights complaints, with some workers waiting over a year for resolution. Currently more than 3,000 wage claims remain unresolved — delays that can mean real financial hardship for workers.

BOLI's 2025–27 budget ([House Bill 5015](#)) directly addresses this crisis by adding investigators, modernizing case management systems, and improving intake processes to serve the public more efficiently.

Beyond backlog reduction, the budget proposal also advances BOLI's long-term goals of worker protection, civil rights enforcement, and workforce development. Key investments include:

- **Expanding Apprenticeship Access:** Increased funding will support the development of new pre-apprenticeship programs, particularly in underrepresented communities, and create a permanent unit for competitive grants and innovation.
- **Targeted Civil Rights Enforcement:** BOLI will reduce average caseloads per investigator, improve access to mediation, and re-establish the Oregon Commission on Civil Rights to better engage community voices.
- **Employer Education and Compliance:** The agency will continue to provide technical assistance and proactive outreach, especially to small businesses navigating wage, hour, and civil rights laws.

“Workers need to be heard and protected by the laws we’ve put in place. This isn’t just about clearing a backlog,” said **Rep. Dacia Grayber** (D-SW Portland and East Beaverton), chair of the House Committee on Labor and Workplace Standards. “It’s about making sure Oregon’s workers—regardless of who they are or where they live—can count on their rights being protected.”

Having passed the House of Representatives, the BOLI budget (HB 5015) will now move to the Senate floor for consideration.

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