



# PRESS RELEASE

## OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

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For more information, Contact:  
Hannah Kurowski:  
Hannah.Kurowski@oregonlegislature.gov

### **House Democrats Vote to Strengthen Wages for Construction Workers**

*Senate Bill 493 A provides public contractors in Oregon with better pay and incentivizes continued training for workers*

SALEM, OR— The Oregon House of Representatives voted today to pass legislation that codifies stronger wages and benefits for workers on publicly funded construction projects. [Senate Bill 493 A](#), which passed 35 to 22, provides that the prevailing wage rate (PWR) for a trade or occupation is the wage established in a collective bargaining agreement (CBA) for that locality. If there is more than one CBA in a locality, then the highest wage rate among the CBAs prevails. If a CBA does not exist for a given trade or occupation in a locality, the Labor Commissioner must determine the PWR using an independent wage survey.

“It’s long overdue for the State of Oregon to recognize community standards established by prevailing wage rate and continue the public private partnership investing in family wages, healthcare, apprenticeship, and training for the construction industry,” said [Rep. Paul Holvey](#) (D-Eugene), who carried the legislation on the House floor. “Our current system for determining wage rates is broken. Wages are stagnating under the current system, and we need to make this change if Oregon wants to cultivate a competitive market for a skilled workforce and vibrant construction industry.”

This legislation also seeks to address pay equity for construction workers. The income gap between Black construction workers and White construction workers is 53% lower in states with a prevailing wage law compared to states without one. The bill will apply to all public works and goes into effect on January 1, 2022.

SB 493 A now moves to the Governor’s desk for consideration.

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