



PRESS RELEASE

OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

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House Votes to Improve Strategic Workforce Development

SALEM – In an effort to further advance opportunity for working Oregonians, the Oregon House of Representatives voted today to strengthen the state’s workforce development efforts. [House Bill 3437](#), which passed 55-1, seeks to address the gap in skilled talent and to promote economic growth.

In addition to changing the name of the State Workforce Investment Board to the Workforce and Talent Development Board, the bill expands board duties to identify key industries and their needs—including education and training—and to expand growth. The bill requires the board to convene a group of stakeholders to determine challenges and opportunities for developing talent pipelines. The stakeholder group is to include:

- Senior executives of key industries, Oregon Business Development Commission, Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Oregon Department of Education, Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries, STEM Investment Council, local workforce development boards, Oregon Employment Department, Oregon Department of Human Services, Oregon Commission for the Blind, Chief Education Office, Youth Development Council and other partners.

It also requires the board to create a state Workforce and Talent Development Plan that would be updated every biennium and submitted to the Governor, who appoints the board, and the legislature.

Rep. Jeff Reardon (D-Happy Valley), who is also the chair of the House Committee Higher Education and Workforce Development, was the chief sponsor of the legislation.

“Oregon has a complex web of organizations working to improve the connections between working Oregonians and those businesses who need skilled workers,” Rep. Reardon said. “This bill seeks to streamline that work and create a plan to build those connections across the state. I believe this step is important to continue Oregon’s strong economic growth.”

Rep. Janeen Sollman (D-Hillsboro) was a sponsor of the legislation. She said it was important for our higher education system to develop multiple pathways for Oregonians as they seek to find a profession.

“By establishing this group, and requiring a Talent Development Plan for the key industries and occupations, we would be returning to a journey with multiple pathways,” Rep. Sollman said. “One where you could go to school for a degree, or go to a trade school for a high demand job and have a very strong living wage job in just a couple of years.”

House Bill 3437 joins a slew of legislation championed by Oregon House Democrats this session that has sought to provide opportunity and protections to working Oregonians.

The bill now moves to the Oregon Senate for consideration.

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