



OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

5/28/2025

Timothy G. Sekerak
Chief Clerk of the House
State Capitol Building
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Vote Explanation on SB 426 B

Dear Chief Clerk Sekerak,

Thank you for the opportunity to file a vote explanation on SB 426B.

Our most vulnerable workers deserve to be paid fairly for their work, and wage theft is a very real issue. However, I do not believe this bill addresses the underlying causes of pervasive wage theft. I have great respect for the sponsors of SB 426B and their efforts to find solutions, however, I do not believe this bill would be needed if BOLI was resourced to work at its full capacity. This bill does nothing to bolster enforcement, licensing accountability, and existing oversight. The perceived need for accountability does not equate to actual accountability through investigation, enforcement, or prosecutorial powers over bad actors.

I fully support our blue-collar workers being paid fairly for the work they perform with skill and expertise, but I am not confident that this bill will result in the changes that are desired. Rather than bringing about fairness and equity, it will likely have the unintended consequence of undermining economic growth and diversity by discouraging emerging and small contractors due to the uncertainty and legal exposure for those not directly responsible for managing day-to-day construction operations.

The more balanced and equitable approach to preventing and enforcing wage theft is to ensure BOLI receives the resources to fill gaps in licensing, oversight and enforcement for bad actors.

For these reasons, I am respectfully voting No on SB 426 B.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Mari Watanabe", is written over a horizontal line.

State Representative Mari Watanabe

