



Commissioner Brad Avakian
Bureau of Labor and Industries

Press Release

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BOLI Announces Round II of Highway Workforce Development Agreements
Key Training and Support Programs Will Help Reduce Barriers to Employment, Diversify the Highway Workforce, and Keep Oregonians on the Job

PORTLAND – Oregon’s Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) today announced two more agreements that will provide critical training and support for Oregon workers in the highway construction trades. The contracts, which were awarded to the Oregon and Southern Idaho Laborers-Employers Training Trust (OSILETT) and Portland Community College (PCC), represent the second round of agreements made pursuant to the BOLI-ODOT Heavy Highway Workforce Development Program.

“Our top priority is expanding job opportunities for Oregonians around the state, and that’s exactly what this program does,” said BOLI Commissioner Brad Avakian. “Under the projects we’re announcing today, early training will be more accessible to women and people of color who are seeking careers in the highway construction industry, and key support will be available to help young apprentices overcome financial barriers to completing their training and qualifying for living-wage jobs.”

Oregon Department of Transportation Director Matt Garrett emphasized the importance of the highway workforce development program to the state’s overall economic health: “Our transportation infrastructure is critical to Oregon’s competitiveness in the global marketplace, and a highly qualified workforce strengthens that infrastructure, while broadening workforce skills.”

Pursuant to their agreements with the state, OSILETT and PCC will provide a wide variety of services, including expanded educational opportunities for students interested in highway construction careers, guidance, and targeted training for aspiring apprentices. OSILETT will receive \$172,870 to provide services across Oregon, and PCC will receive approximately \$101,313 to provide services in the Portland/METRO region.

The agreements announced today follow two contract awards unveiled last month: a \$623,265 contract with Cooper Zeitz to provide training and support services statewide, and a \$69,458 contract with Portland Youthbuilders focused on youth pre-apprenticeship services in the Portland/METRO region.

BOLI expects to announce the final contract award under the Heavy Highway Workforce Development Program later this month. In all, the program provides up to \$1 million for services that increase diversity in the highway construction workforce and help Oregonians gain and keep high-skill, living-wage jobs.

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