



July 11, 2017

Serving as Labor Commissioner for more than nine years has been one of the great privileges of my professional life. As someone who started his career as a civil rights attorney, working with the talented and dedicated staff at BOLI to protect the rights of our fellow Oregonians has been incredibly rewarding.

Although I will not be seeking a new term in 2018, I am incredibly grateful for the experience to lead this bureau and help fulfil its critical mission. I'm proud of the role the team at BOLI has played in making a positive impact in people's lives.

Together, we initiated the effort to **return of 21st century shop classes**, secured **record civil rights** and **wage enforcement settlements**, and **expanded our agency's support for employers**. **More women and people of color** are participating in apprenticeships than ever before. We've **protected veteran opportunity initiatives** so that they can continue contributing their talents and skills to local communities after their service. And, working with the Oregon Council on Civil Rights, we've developed a set of policies to achieve **equal pay for equal work** in Oregon.

Some of BOLI's accomplishments during the past nine years include:

- Securing a [\\$2.4 million settlement against Daimler Trucks North America](#) stemming from complaints of racial discrimination and intimidation, the largest civil rights settlement in the agency's history.
- Expanding apprenticeship opportunities for women and people of color, including [nationally-recognized efforts](#) to remove barriers to participation. As a result, women in Oregon participate at twice the national average in the heavy highway construction trades.
- [Securing military burial rights](#) for Nancy Lynchild, spouse of retired Lieutenant Colonel (Lt Col) Linda Campbell, in the nation's first approval for a same-sex burial in a national cemetery.
- Prosecuted Stars Cabaret for [sexual harassment and discrimination](#) of two vulnerable minors, 13 and 15, resulting in the [largest individual settlement](#) (\$1.25 million) in bureau history.
- Securing a [record \\$2.5 million settlement for 325 workers](#) who were not fully paid for their work on two construction projects for Southern Oregon University.
- Bringing charges of discrimination based on national origin against local restaurant chain Typhoon Inc. [Secured a \\$100,000 settlement](#) in the civil rights and wage and hour case, settling allegations that the restaurant chain forced Thai workers to work off the clock and for wages below their U.S.-recruited counterparts.

- Creating the Oregon Council on Civil Rights to develop and advance policies and initiatives, such as the landmark 2014 report [Pay Inequality in Oregon](#), which provided the roadmap to end the pay gap between women, people of color and their white male counterparts. Following the report's recommendation, worked with legislative leaders to:
 - Enact Oregon's Paycheck Transparency Act [[SB 2007](#)] so that workers can discuss salaries with colleagues free from retaliation;
 - [Increase the minimum wage](#) to help lift our lowest wage earners out of poverty;
 - [Enact paid sick days](#) so that workers don't have to choose between a paycheck and caring for themselves or a loved one; and
 - Pass [predictable scheduling](#) so parents can balance their work schedules with raising a family and an [equal pay bill](#) that expands the tools available to Oregonians experiencing unfair treatment.

I want to thank everyone at the bureau for their professionalism, hard work, and commitment to ensuring fairness for all Oregonians and support for Oregon's employers. They have been the central ingredient in the undeniable progress we've made in building a stronger, more equitable state for everyone.

Thanks, also, to my former colleagues in the Legislature. I know that each of you work to make Oregon a better place each and every day, at times at great sacrifice.

And thank you especially to my wife, Debbie and our children, Nathan and Claire. Public service is a remarkable experience – for a person and a family – and they have been unwavering not only in their support of me, but continually contributing valuable thoughts and insights in support of their state and community. I could not love and appreciate them more.

My term has many months ahead, and I intend to be active as ever for the remainder. Serving as Oregon's Labor Commissioner is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and by making my plans clear now, it's my hope that others who may be interested in the post can start giving it thoughtful consideration.

Thank you for allowing me to serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "B. Avakian". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brad Avakian