

Legislators,

As worker advocates, we're collectively reaching out to ask you to support BOLI's full budget ask of 84 positions to run a functional agency.

We want to be clear: this funding ask is simply to get BOLI operating at equilibrium and only slightly above where they were in the 1980s despite a 208% increase in wage and hour claims in the past 4 years and a 278% increase in civil rights claims in the last decade. Anything short of this ask will not ultimately produce the results that workers need and have long lasting consequences.

The problem:

- BOLI has been forced to dismiss claims from workers – not because they lack merit, but because they don't have the staff, leading to a backlog of over 7000 cases
- **74% of Oregonians filing claims say they are experiencing economic hardship, including inability to pay their rent or purchase food for their families as a result of their claim**
- 74 laws have been passed by the Oregon Legislature in the past 10 years that impact the Bureau, but only 10 had funding to enforce them

The solution:

- **The Legislature can entirely use "Other Funds" through a one-time transfer of \$25 million from the Worker Benefit Fund to fund these 84 positions.** BOLI is committed to identifying a permanent other fund source, but in the meantime, this will ensure workers are getting wages they're owed, and all civil rights violations are investigated.

The consequences of not acting:

- Half measures equal half results. **Absent funding their entire package now, we fear that many workers won't even bother trying to get help the next time their wages are stolen, or they're harassed on the job – allowing bad actors to run amok**
- The problems of dismissed cases, the inability to pass good, enforceable policies, and ultimately exacerbating economic hardship for some of the most vulnerable Oregonians will continue and worsen.

Now is the time to make this investment in BOLI. During a time of economic uncertainty, we should do everything we can to ensure Oregon workers' rights are protected and our laws are enforced.

Thank you for standing with workers in their ability to get justice through BOLI,

