



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Chair Hudson, Vice Chair Fragala, Vice Chair Harbick, and Members of the Committee,

As industry and education leaders invested in workforce development, we urge the Oregon Legislature to support HB 3552 to allocate a new \$156.4 million to support the creation and operation of Regional Career Centers (RCCs) for the 2025-27 school year.

In Yamhill and Polk Counties, Sheridan School District has already begun work on a Career Technical Education Center (CTEC) that would serve multiple rural districts with technical skills training in the areas of Diesel Mechanics & Truck Driving, Agribusiness, Fire Science/EMT and Manufacturing. The site has been purchased and facilities have been designed with input from various local business representatives. Sheridan's Barbara Roberts CTEC project is shovel-ready, and currently waiting only for the funding necessary to begin the next steps of the project. Allocation of funds from HB 3552 would allow Phase I to move forward, and ensure our first two pathways, Diesel Mechanics & Truck Driving, as well as Fire Science/EMT could begin serving students as soon as initial construction is complete.

Career Technical Education (CTE) Centers are critically needed in rural areas. Pathways include opportunities for dual credit towards continuing education. Additionally, access to CTE programs has been shown to reduce educational and economic disparities in rural communities (American Education Research Journal), however resources are already severely limited in rural districts. To remain competitive and meet growing workforce demands, increased investment in regional CTE programs is urgently needed.

By 2029, the state is projected to have 52,000 new job openings annually in careers requiring technical skills. Addressing this gap is essential to Oregon's economic growth and long-term success, however Oregon remains one of the few states without dedicated and specific CTE funding for all schools.

This funding will allow for the development, construction, and remodeling of facilities to increase capacity and access to CTE statewide. ESDs will lead planning processes to ensure RCCs are tailored to meet local workforce and student needs. Funding for RCCs will provide advanced career development opportunities and build school-to-career pathways by coordinating internships, apprenticeships, and work-based learning opportunities with local businesses. Additionally, it will support the hiring of qualified educators and staff to deliver instruction directly to regional schools.

We believe in the transformative impact of Regional Career Centers and the opportunities they provide for students. We respectfully ask for your support in funding \$156.4 million to establish and operate RCCs and address Oregon's growing workforce demands.

Sincerely,

Yamhill County Board of Commissioners

Chair, Kit Johnston

Vice Chair, Mary Starrett

Commissioner, David "Bubba" King

Approved by the Yamhill County Board of
Commissioners on 03/06/2025
via Board Order B.O. 25-069