



## Commissioner Brad Avakian

Bureau of Labor and Industries

### Press Release

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### **Revitalizing Career and Technical Education Becomes a Shared Priority in Salem** *House Education Committee takes up bipartisan legislation to strengthen our workforce*

PORTLAND – Bipartisan legislation to revitalize and enhance Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Oregon’s middle schools and high schools took center stage in Salem today. A broad coalition of businesses, labor unions, trade associations, educators, and legislators from both parties came together to discuss the importance of CTE to Oregon’s economic future, and the House Education Committee held its first public hearing on the coalition’s bill (HB 3362).

“Oregon’s economic health is fundamentally linked to the availability of a skilled workforce,” said Bureau of Labor and Industries Commissioner Brad Avakian. “One of the best ways to strengthen our workforce is to revitalize Career and Technical Education programs so students can develop the practical skills that Oregon employers are consistently demanding.”

HB 3362, which already has 59 co-sponsors in the Oregon Legislature, would jump-start the revitalization of CTE in Oregon’s middle schools and high schools by: (1) establishing a grant program to fund the restoration and expansion of CTE classes, (2) facilitating the formation of future skill centers and CTE-focused charters, (3) requiring inter-agency coordination on CTE issues, and (4) fostering CTE partnerships between public schools, community colleges, universities, businesses and unions.

“This bill is bringing Oregonians together across party lines because it will achieve goals we all share,” said Representative Sal Esquivel (R-Medford). “It will equip our students to compete for high-wage jobs in high-growth industries, and it will provide our businesses with the highly skilled workers they need to continue or expand their operations here in Oregon.”

HB 3362 will also help Oregon’s long-term budget outlook. The State of Washington reports that every dollar invested in secondary CTE programs earns the state \$7.10 in revenue.

“Investing in Career and Technical Education today will pay big dividends in the future by keeping more homegrown businesses in Oregon, attracting new businesses to the state, and creating more good jobs for our workers – all of which helps our state’s bottom line,” said Representative Michael Dembrow (D-Portland). “In short, this bill is a win for Oregon’s students, a win for Oregon’s businesses, and a win for Oregon’s economy.”

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