

Dear Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee

As testimony supporting SB 1040, I would like to share with you the story of the founding of my union, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. The IBEW was formed in St. Louis Missouri 126 years ago. Henry Miller (the first President and recognized founder) and a handful of linemen electricians travelled the country working and organizing their coworkers into a union. These Linemen were the first 'electricians', installing power transmission and streetlights in major cities in the United States. Their reason for forming a union? At that time, lineman mortality rate was 50%. Their low wages would not provide for their families, and their frequent deaths left behind wives and children with nothing. Literally half of workers in this trade were killed by their job. Five years after the founding, in 1896 Henry Miller died from electrical contact while working in Washington D.C.

These many years later, I am proud to be a member of the IBEW. Our workers are so much safer today due to our relentless work on their behalf. I believe all workers in the U.S. are safer and experience the quality of life they do because of our and other Union's efforts. I believe that unions do important work today in Oregon to protect workers and their quality of life. I hope you will support this bill and the workers it protects.

Thank You,

Jon Jensen

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