



Commissioner Brad Avakian
Bureau of Labor and Industries

COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE - June 8, 2009

BOLI Budget on the Move; Up for Final Consideration before Ways & Means

Friends,

Last Wednesday, the budget proposed by the Co-Chairs of Ways and Means moved a step closer to reality for the Bureau of Labor and Industries. BOLI's budget was passed out of Subcommittee and moved to the full Committee on Ways and Means for final consideration.

With Oregon feeling the effects of a slowing economy and facing a \$4.2 billion budget shortfall, the committee approved a 10% reduction to BOLI's budget, which is a cut of roughly \$1.4 million. And BOLI is not alone, as almost every state agency is facing cuts in their 09-11 budgets to account for this massive budget shortfall.

As I said two weeks ago, we stand ready to face this reduction. While these cutbacks will affect every BOLI division, we will still continue to enforce wage and hour and civil rights laws, provide technical assistance for employers, and fight to protect employment rights and advance employment opportunities. That is our mission, and we will work as hard as we can to ensure we continue to meet it during these tough times.

Through the economic downturn and Oregon's record unemployment rate, BOLI services are seeing an increasingly high demand. Our staff at BOLI will continue to investigate over 2,200 civil rights complaints, process 2,600 wage claims, and respond to over 25,000 e-mail and phone questions from employers annually. We remain committed to protecting our core mission and services, because Oregonians need us to.

Even with these cuts to our services, BOLI is dedicated to expanding its efforts to help employers and employees. We will continue to expand our work in rural Oregon through Technical Assistance for Employers seminars, statewide apprenticeship opportunities, and the work of our Farm Labor Unit. We will work to have the new Oregon Council on Civil Rights reach out to every corner of the state. And we will always fight both for Oregon's workers and for the success of Oregon's businesses.

Please don't hesitate to contact our offices if you have any questions about the services we provide or about BOLI's budget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "B. Avakian".

Brad Avakian
State Labor Commissioner

The mission of the Bureau of Labor and Industries is to protect employment rights, advance employment opportunities, and protect access to housing and public accommodations free from discrimination.

First Oregon Council on Civil Rights Meeting Set for July 16

After consulting with Co-Chairs James Mason and Connie Ashbrook, the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) has announced that the first meeting of the Oregon Council on Civil Rights (OCCR) will be held at 2 p.m. on Thursday, July 16th at BOLI's Portland offices.

The OCCR was launched because there is a need for a greater effort to address the causes and effects of unlawful discrimination in Oregon, and this Council will work closely with BOLI and its Civil Rights Division over the coming months and years to fight for better education on and enforcement of civil rights laws.

To fulfill its mission, the OCCR and its members will work toward several goals. They will study and monitor the causes, effects and solutions to unlawful discrimination in Oregon. They will consider and propose legislative and agency-based actions and solutions. They will foster communication, goodwill, cooperation, and conciliation among groups interested in civil rights across the state. And, they will advise the state on policies and procedures related to civil rights.

The public is welcome to attend this initial meeting of the OCCR. For detailed directions to BOLI's Portland offices, please [click here](#). For more information about the OCCR and its membership, please [click here](#).

Upcoming Technical Assistance for Employers Seminars

The Technical Assistance for Employers (TA) program offers a variety of training seminars for Oregon employers, supervisors, managers, and human resource professionals. TA trainers work closely with bureau enforcement divisions to provide educational seminars that cover the latest developments in employment law. BOLI seminars are acclaimed as an effective and affordable way to help keep your organization in compliance with employment laws – and out of court.

Here is a list of our upcoming seminars. To reserve your spot today, please [visit our website](#) or download a [registration form](#). Please call 971-673-0825 with questions.

June 2009 Seminars

Medford – Wage & Hour Laws (June 9)

Portland – Recordkeeping Requirements (June 11); Two-Day Employee Supervision (June 23-24)

Eugene – Domestic Violence Leave and Harassment in the Workplace (June 18)

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July 2009 Seminars

Portland –Wage & Hour Laws (July 7); Leave Laws in Oregon (July 9); Effective Supervisory Practices (July 21); Advanced Leave Laws (July 30)

Salem – Effective Supervisory Practices (July 15)

Tillamook – Wage & Hour Laws (July 16)

Eugene – Wage & Hour Laws (July 28)
