



Commissioner Brad Avakian  
Bureau of Labor and Industries

## COMMISSIONER'S MESSAGE – October 26, 2009

Dear Friends:

There's plenty going on at BOLI right now, and I'll highlight the Oregon Council on Civil Rights and the creation of the BOLI Business Leadership Awards momentarily. But first, I want to give you another update on my travels around the state and some of the feedback I've been receiving from Oregonians.

My schedule of public events has not slowed down at all. In the last two weeks alone, I've been in Eugene (twice), Florence (twice), Forest Grove, teleconferenced to a public meeting in Medford and moderated a panel on workforce issues in Sunriver. On Friday, October 30, I'll be speaking to the Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce. We are also still planning visits to local communities around the state, so stay tuned for an announcement of my next set of stops.

Of course, it's important for any statewide-elected official to be seen around the state and to hear diverse thoughts about that official's work. I enjoy receiving this feedback and having the opportunity to see the beautiful diversity (both human-made and naturally occurring) of our state. As many have said and will continue to say, we are blessed to live in Oregon.

Recently I have talked with folks who have all kinds of ideas of what state government "should" be doing. While some of the ideas conflict, there is a very clear thread running through all of them: belief in our fellow Oregonians and the unlimited potential of our people to do great things when given the opportunity to succeed.

I have also noticed a nearly unanimous position in the people I have talked with: they value this newsletter. Oregonians want to hear about what government is doing for them, and I'm glad that these brief updates from me are giving my friends and neighbors a better sense of what BOLI is up to. With a huge range of responsibilities from educating employers to defending civil rights, enforcing wage and hour laws to building a stronger workforce through apprenticeship and training, BOLI is doing critical work that all Oregonians should be following.

If you want to help spread the word about our work on all these important issues, encourage your friends and colleagues to [sign up for the Commissioner's Message](#).

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.*

## OCCR Gears Up for Tough Issues

On Thursday, Oct. 22, the Oregon Council on Civil Rights (OCCR) met to hear presentations by a number of local community organizations about their roles in advancing civil rights in Oregon. Maria Lisa Johnson from the Portland Human Rights Commission described that group's mission and approach, sparking thoughtful questions from council members. Published reports on civil rights and equity issues were a major focus, including presentations by Marcus Mundy on the Urban League's *State of Black Oregon* and Diane Riley on the Coalition for a Livable Future's *Equity Atlas*. There was also discussion of poverty and funding for assistance programs after a brief presentation by Chuck Sheketoff of the Oregon Center for Public Policy.

"It's important for the council to have a full sense of the issues on the table," said OCCR Co-Chair Connie Ashbrook of Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc. "We are focusing in on the priority issues and we will make better recommendations by drawing on the good work that other organizations have already compiled."

During brief remarks, Commissioner Avakian highlighted pay equity for women and minorities as an issue that he needs the council to focus on. Additional meetings are expected to be held to accelerate the process of prioritizing the many critical issues on the council's radar.

Detailed information about the council is [available here](#).

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## Nominations Open for BOLI Business Leadership Awards

Commissioner Avakian is pleased to announce the opening of nominee submissions for the BOLI Business Leadership Awards. These awards are intended to provide distinction to a select group of businesses that go above and beyond the call of duty in supporting civil rights and equal opportunity, fair workplaces and developing Oregon's workforce through employee training. The awards ceremony will take place on December 9 at the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual BOLI Employment Law Conference in Portland.

"We are fortunate in Oregon to have businesses which exemplify the spirit of the BOLI mission in their work every day," said Commissioner Avakian. "We at BOLI want to recognize some of those businesses for their exceptional efforts."

BOLI Business Leadership Awards will be presented in three categories: Civil Rights Champion, Fair Workplace Champion and Workforce Development Champion.

Nominations are open now through November 18. Nominees must currently be operating primarily within Oregon, or have headquarters in Oregon. Awards will be determined based on information provided in the nomination form, as well as the nominee's company size and geographic location.

**What:** BOLI Business Leadership Awards  
**Who:** Presented by BOLI Commissioner Brad Avakian  
**When:** Nominations are due by 5pm on Wednesday, November 18  
**Where:** Nomination forms and additional information are [available here](#)  
**How:** Submit nominations by email to [Commissioner.Brad.Avakian@state.or.us](mailto:Commissioner.Brad.Avakian@state.or.us) Or by fax to 971-673-0762

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## Upcoming BOLI Events

*Mark your calendars and sign-up now!*

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event Type</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Contact</b>
Nov. 2 & 3	TA Seminar	Eugene— Downtown Athletic Club	<a href="#">Employee Supervision: A Two-Day Basic Training</a>	TA Program @ 971-673-0825
Nov. 3	PWR Seminar	Columbia Gorge Comm. College	PWR for Contractors and Subcontractors	PWR Unit @ 971-673-0838
Nov. 3	PWR Seminar	Baker County Library	PWR for Public Agencies	PWR Unit @ 971-673-0838
Nov. 4	PWR Seminar	Umatilla-Morrow ESD Office	PWR for Contractors and Subcontractors	PWR Unit @ 971-673-0838
Nov. 4	PWR Seminar	Umatilla-Morrow ESD Office	PWR for Public Agencies	PWR Unit @ 971-673-0838
Nov. 5	TA Seminar	Portland State Office Bldg.	<a href="#">Leave Laws in Oregon: Basic OFLA/FMLA</a>	TA Program @ 971-673-0825
Nov. 10	PWR Seminar	Portland State Office Bldg.	PWR for Contractors and Subcontractors	PWR Unit @ 971-673-0838
Nov. 17	TA Seminar	Salem—Chemeketa Winema Bldg. 48	<a href="#">Wage and Hour Laws</a>	TA Program @ 971-673-0825
Nov. 18	TA Seminar	Portland State Office Bldg.	<a href="#">Advanced Leave Laws</a>	TA Program @ 971-673-0825
Nov. 19	PWR Seminar	Eugene Water & Electric Board	PWR for Contractors and Subcontractors	PWR Unit @ 971-673-0838
Dec. 1	PWR Seminar	Salem—ODOT Training Center.	PWR for Contractors and Subcontractors	PWR Unit @ 971-673-0838
Dec. 8	PWR Seminar	Portland State Office Bldg.	PWR for Public Agencies	PWR Unit @ 971-673-0838
Dec. 9 & 10	25 <sup>th</sup> ANNUAL EMPLOYMENT LAW CONFERENCE	PORTLAND OREGON CONVENTION CENTER	<a href="#">Leave Laws, Caselaw Updates, the always popular Legislative Update and more!</a>	TA Program @ 971-673-0825
Dec. 10	PWR Seminar	Portland State Office Bldg.	PWR for Contractors and Subcontractors	PWR Unit @ 971-673-0838
Dec. 15	TA Seminar	Portland State Office Bldg.	<a href="#">Wage and Hour Laws</a>	TA Program @ 971-673-0825
Dec. 17	TA Seminar	Portland State Office Bldg.	<a href="#">Recordkeeping Requirements</a>	TA Program @ 971-673-0825
Dec. 17	OSATC Meeting	NW College of Construction	State Apprenticeship Council Quarterly Mtg	ATD Staff @ 971-673-0760

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