

April 05, 2013

Senator Shields, Chair  
Senator George, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on General Government, Consumer and Small Business Protection  
Oregon Legislative Assembly

Re: Support for SB 573

Dear Chair Shields, Vice Chair George, and Members of the Committee:

We are writing to ask for your support of SB 573 to provide employees with stronger tools for recovering stolen pay and, in doing so, deter employers from stealing wages in the first place.

Main Street Alliance of Oregon, a coalition of over 1200 small businesses across Oregon, calls on you to take action to make Oregon a state where work is honored and wage theft is not tolerated. The repercussions of wage theft are statewide and affect business owners, consumers, and workers alike. It is time to take action now, and SB 573 is a great step in the right direction.

SB 573 will help Oregon small business owners by leveling the playing field; now we won't have to compete against businesses whose business model includes not paying their employees. SB 573 will directly take property from employers trying to rob their employees out of pay – discouraging them from cheating their employees in the first place. More, the dollars that get rightfully put back in workers' pockets gets cycled back into our local economies, helping small businesses all across Oregon.

This is why the Main Street Alliance of Oregon has joined over 30 other organizations statewide to stop wage theft in Oregon.

It is clear that Oregon's current laws are not functioning adequately to ensure that all employers pay workers in our state the pay they have earned for their labor. Despite the existence of basic wage and hour laws, wage theft is widespread in Oregon – from minimum wage and overtime violations to complete nonpayment of wages.

We urge you to support SB 573 in Committee and on the Senate floor. Oregon small business owners want everyone to be treated fairly and know that this bill is a great step in the right direction.

Yours respectfully,



Jim Houser, co-chair  
Hawthorne Auto Clinic, Portland



Mark Kellenbeck, co-chair  
BrainJoy LLC, Medford