mAbDx
Immunodiagnostics

www.mabdx.com

Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development April 11, 2013

Sen. Betsy Johnson (D-Scappose)
Rep. Bob Jenson (R-Pendleton)
Sen. Bill Hansell (R-Athena)
Sen. Chip Shields (D-Portland)
Rep. Caddy McKeown (D-Coos Bay)
Rep. Tobias Read (D-Beaverton)

RE: HB5028, Business Oregon Budget

Dear Committee members:

I am writing to encourage the subcommittee to include support for the "Partnership for Innovation and Competitiveness" in HB5028 as proposed by Oregon's research universities, the Oregon Innovation Council and Oregon-based companies. Having founded one and co-founded another spin-out biotech small business from the University of Oregon (UO), I know first-hand the problems and hurdles that hinder formation of new companies based on technologies developed at our public institutions. The proposed Oregon Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network (OREGON RAIN) offers practical, attainable solutions that will help entrepreneurs overcome these obstacles. Together with the Research Collaboratory and the Metals Initiative, OREGON RAIN will support the growth of a vibrant and sustainable new high-tech sector in Oregon.

Both of my companies, first MitoSciences, Inc. (recently sold, but still firmly rooted in Eugene and the employer of more than 25 highly skilled workers), and more recently mAbDx, Inc., are based on deployment of innovative biological materials and technologies first developed in my UO laboratory as molecular tools for basic research. We soon realized these technologies also had potential for wider use and commercial applications. Although we received encouragement and support from the UO, establishing MitoSciences and moving "across the street" (into the UO Riverfront Research Park) required a leap of faith and significant personal investment to build out laboratory space in what was previously basic office space. Similarly, although the UO helped us make contacts with potential investors and advisors, there was no real model to follow, nor practical support to help us form a viable business operation. So we spent considerable effort re-inventing basic business solutions – efforts that could have been better spent in the lab. OREGON RAIN will address both of these concerns, first by providing entrepreneurs with affordable, modern laboratory facilities in which they can take first steps outside the University, and second by providing a network of business advisors and experienced colleagues to speed acquisition and implementation of the 'soft-skills' needed to start and grow a biotech business. These features will undoubtedly lower the barriers faced by entrepreneurs and encourage many more successful spinouts from the UO and Oregon State University.

Please help improve the business environment in Oregon and provide employment opportunities for highly skilled graduates of our state universities by supporting the growth of our biotechnology sector through implementation of the Partnership for Innovation and Competitiveness.

Thank you,

Michael F. Marusich, Ph.D.
Chief Scientific Officer, mAbDx, Inc. mmarusich@mabdx.com

**1900 Millrace Drive, Suite 113S**
**Eugene, OR 97403-2096**
**Phone: (541) 521-8096**