**SID LEIKEN**

Lane County Commissioner
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April 10, 2013

Oregon State Legislature
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
900 Court St. NE, S, 4-19

Subject: Regional Accelerator Innovation Network (RAIN)

Lane County supports the Oregon RAIN concept as a regional approach to knowledge based economic development.

We want to underscore the importance of science and technology through innovation based entrepreneurial development. The Regional Accelerator Innovation Network will provide all the nuts and bolts to help entrepreneurs turn their research ideas into revenue generating businesses that create jobs. We see this regional collaboration as a great opportunity to grow a healthy knowledge based economy.

Oregon RAIN will coordinate and leverage the research activities of the University of Oregon and Oregon State University and also pull in regional communities to support the South Willamette Regional approach to technology and innovation based research ventures. RAIN is an example of an economic development effort that builds on the strengths of our Universities and brings together a myriad of regional community partners with capacity to help launch and grow the technology based innovation start-ups being generated at our great research universities.

Lane County is supportive of this effort and has contributed financially toward this regional approach to economic development.

We ask for your help in supporting the entire $15.5 million for Business Oregon with $7.5 million ear marked for RAIN to facilitate and stimulate the kind of economic growth that is sorely needed in our region.

Sincerely,

Sid Leiken
Chair, Lane County Board of Commissioners