

March 13, 2013

Oregon State House Business and Labor Committee

Chair Doherty, Vice Chair Kennemer, Vice Chair Barton, and Members of the Committee,

Main Street Alliance of Oregon urges you to support and vote favorably on House Bills 2976, 2977, and 3142.

The members of Main Street Alliance of Oregon are small businesses ranging from realtors to retailers and financial consultants to family farms. We are a network of small businesses statewide, with 1200 businesses on our current roster.

As small business owners, we oppose wage theft. It creates an uneven playing field for employers who pay living wages and provide benefits. We must compete against those who do not.

The increasing practice of mislabeling of employees as independent contractors also threatens employers who follow the rules. Misclassification bars employees of the right to minimum wage and overtime, unemployment and workers' compensation. State taxes are not withheld. Again, employers who do not misclassify their employees are undercut by those who do.

Main Street Alliance of Oregon also opposes wage theft because it harms our communities. Wage theft denies income and commerce to our communities. It lowers consumption and spending that directly affects business. And it also corrodes the well-being of the cities and town where we reside.

Wage theft means a race to the bottom for workers, businesses, and our communities.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 2976, HB 2977, and HB 3142. We urge you do approve these bills and forward them with a do pass recommendation.

Yours respectfully,



Jim Houser, co-chair
Hawthorne Auto Clinic, Portland



Mark Kellenbeck, co-chair
BrainJoy LLC, Medford