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*The leader in advocating
for a healthy economic environment*

March 12, 2013

Chair Burdick and Members of the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue:

The Westside Economic Alliance (WEA) is in support of the Strategic Investment Program (SIP) and the Gain Share method of tax sharing. Many of our members, both private and public, have seen the value of the partnership between the state and local governments that is inherent to this program. Our members are also aware of the strong financial benefits to our communities and to the state as a whole.

As you know, the SIP is an economic development program created by the Oregon Legislature to increase business growth. The program has outperformed expectations in attracting and retaining companies that provide high quality jobs, especially in Washington County. These new jobs, and the income taxes that they create, provide significant benefits for our local communities and also dramatically increase the revenues going to the state's General Fund.

In 2007 the Legislature was farsighted in passing SB 954 by an overwhelming majority. The legislation underscored the importance of the partnership between the local governments and the state in creating and securing opportunities for business growth. Now is not the time to be shortsighted.

The state and the local communities reap benefits by allowing local governments the chance to appropriately recoup investments that were made to attract and retain high quality jobs through the sharing of newly created income tax revenues. The Legislature must stay committed to the design of the SIP and to Gain Share, the model of sharing increased income tax revenues.

As partners, the state and the local governments have demonstrated success for all parties and the WEA urges you to continue to support SB 954.

Westside Economic Alliance is a business advocacy group, representing members from both the public and private sectors in Washington and western Clackamas counties. Together we work to improve the local business climate and the economic health of our region.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Norm Eder".

Norm Eder
President and Chairman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pamela Treece".

Pamela Treece
Executive Director