

Rep. Tobias Read

March 14, 2013

Chair, House Committee on Transportation and Economic Development

Chair Read and members of the Committee:

My name is Marc San Soucie, and I am a City Councilor in the City of Beaverton. I regret that I cannot attend your hearing in person. Kindly consider my written comments on the bills being reviewed at your Friday afternoon meeting.

By way of context, let me also briefly mention that my professional career prior to serving in elected office was in the software engineering field. I have worked in large companies and startups, I have volunteered for the Portland Angel Network and the Oregon Entrepreneurs Network, and in the 1999-2001 boom years I placed some angel investments in Portland-area companies. I now serve as a board member at the Oregon Technology Business Center, a not-for-profit technology incubator started by Beaverton in 2005.

The work done by this Committee and the Legislature in prior sessions regarding increasing access to capital and other supportive services for entrepreneurs is highly valuable, and should be continued to the point of implementation with all reasonable dispatch in this session. While the bills before the Committee on this agenda are not designed to take the concepts of the Oregon Investment Act of 2012 into full implementation, they help clarify the process for reaching a meaningful and successful implementation. I strongly encourage the Committee to forward HB 2223 or its equivalent for full House and Senate consideration.

Beaverton established its incubator in 2005 as an economic development strategy. The City recognized then, and still does today, that entrepreneurs tend to be smart, innovative, determined, and resourceful. However, few have enough capital to fund their own efforts even at the seed stage, and many benefit substantially from entrepreneur education, coaching, and mentoring. The City (and OTBC) do not provide capital, but we attempt to provide just about everything else needed to get off the ground and prepare for private – or state - investment.

In both of my roles, as a City Councilor in support of stronger economic development tools for Oregon, and as a board member for OTBC, I strongly support efforts to increase Oregon's capacity to facilitate the creation and early establishment of new businesses. There are excellent models in other states upon which a task force could draw for some of its recommendations, and many great ideas already in use or being tested here in Oregon, just needing more support.

Please keep this most important economic development tool moving forward.

Regards,

Marc San Soucie

Beaverton City Councilor, OTBC Board member

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