

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued

Action:	Do Pass as Amended, Be Printed Engrossed, and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means by Prior Reference
Vote:	10 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Barton, Fagan, Holvey, Kennemer, Matthews, Thatcher, Thompson, Weidner, Witt, Doherty
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Jan Nordlund, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	4/8, 4/15

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Establishes Office of Small Business Administration within the Office of Secretary of State for purpose of facilitating interactions between small businesses and state agencies. Establishes complaint and investigation procedures. Continuously appropriates moneys to Office of Secretary of State to fund functions of Office of Small Business Assistance.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Giving a voice to small businesses
- Small business as source of economic growth and innovation
- Complex and confusing state regulations
- Limitations of Bureau of Labor and Industries in providing technical assistance

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Prohibits Office of Small Business Assistance from reviewing and investigating a complaint that is the subject of an agency action that could result in a contested case proceeding under the Oregon Administrative Procedures Act.

BACKGROUND: The Secretary of State is a statewide elected official responsible for, among other duties, registering businesses operating in Oregon and conducting audits. In addition, the Office of the Secretary of State conducts special investigations regarding potential misuse of state resources. Its investigations may occur at state agencies, or may involve local governments or contractors receiving state or federal funds from state agencies. Citizens, businesses, and government employees may report government waste, fraud, or abuse to the Audits Division by phone, internet, or mail.

House Bill 3459-A creates the Office of Small Business Assistance within the Office of the Secretary of State with two primary functions: facilitate interactions between small businesses and state agencies, and conduct reviews and investigations of complaints received from small businesses with respect to interactions with state agencies. The measure defines a small business as a prospective, new or established business with 100 or fewer employees that is or will be located in Oregon. The measure also prohibits subjecting a person who makes a complaint or participates in an investigation to penalty, sanction, or restriction.