

October 2, 2013

Business Groups Support Special Session Package

As representatives of a broad base of Oregon businesses, large and small, urban and rural, we support the PERS reform and revenue plan currently before the Legislature. We salute Governor Kitzhaber and the Republican and Democratic legislative leaders for working diligently to arrive at this package, which we believe will be a big boost for public education and for many businesses in our state.

The proposal will put a significant dent in the skyrocketing cost of Oregon's Public Employees Retirement System (PERS). By reducing the state's unfunded PERS liability by some \$4.6 billion, this package will put more teachers in our classrooms, add back school days lost to earlier cutbacks and alleviate the pressure on government entities across Oregon to cut staff and reduce services in order to find the dollars to pay for increasing retirement-related costs. It also reduces the continued upward pressure on taxes to cover costs related to PERS.

We are also pleased to see that the revenue component of the plan brings much needed tax relief to small businesses across Oregon that file as S-corporations or LLCs. We believe this provision will lead to new business investment and grow much needed jobs in every corner of our state. We would have preferred that the plan refrain from increasing taxes on any segment of a business community that is just now regaining its footing after a long and deep recession, but we recognize that this is a package of bills that, on the whole, is good for Oregon, and it will help us continue to build economic growth. We look forward to continue working with the governor and legislative leaders on reframing our tax system so that it encourages investment and job growth rather than penalizing success.

Finally, we support a key part of the package that will bring regulatory stability for Oregon farmers. This legislation will ensure that regulation of agricultural seed occurs only at the state and federal levels, not at the city, county or other municipal levels. This protects Oregon growers from a potential patchwork of regulation across 36 counties and more than 400 cities, ensuring a level playing field for all farmers across Oregon.

We urge you to pass this package of bills.

Support the Special Session Package

