

Senator Chip Shields, Chair
Oregon General Government, Consumer and Small Government Protection Committee
900 Court Street Northeast, S-421
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chairman Shields and Members of the Committee:

As a proud member of the Oregon business community with over 2,300 employees at 13 stores and 1 distribution center, I write to express our opposition to the proposed licensing for interior designers contained in Senate Bill 1521.

If passed, Oregon would go against the vast majority of states which found such legislation to be anti-competitive, anti-consumer and unnecessary. This bill has the potential to curtail services that Lowe's currently makes available to customers and has the added negative consequence of unreasonably limiting the offerings of qualified small businesses. Many of these small businesses rely on Lowe's for products to fulfill customer orders.

While Lowe's supports the protection of the health, safety and welfare of the public, there has been no showing that the continued practice of interior design without additional restrictions has negatively impacted the public or created a danger which is in need of governmental protection. All codes, rules and regulations must be followed by designers regardless of the space that design services are provided for, and the laws that are already in place provide the protection that the public requires.

Should this bill pass into law, the number of available designers would decline precipitously and create a shortage of project planning options to the public. This could result in an unreasonable cost increase to consumers, causing them to forego projects they might otherwise undertake. This translates into a loss of sales opportunities to Lowe's, and a loss of sales tax revenues to the state.

Thank you for considering our perspective. We want the opportunity to compete to be our customers' first choice for home improvement, and respectfully request to continue our current services and offerings in our Oregon stores. We hope you will join us in opposition to Senate Bill 1521. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions or if I can ever be of assistance.

Sincerely,

David Ward
Government Affairs Manager

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