



TO: Senate Committee on Education and Workforce Development
Senator Mark Hass, Chair
Senator Tim Knopp, Vice Chair

FROM: Jessica L. Gomez
Vice Chair, Oregon Workforce Investment Board
Chief Executive Officer, Rogue Valley Microdevices, Inc.

DATE: February 11, 2014

Please consider this letter my written testimony in favor of SB 1566 which assigns new duties to the State Workforce Investment Board so that it can continue to promote coordinated education, employment and job training throughout Oregon.

The Oregon Workforce Investment Board (OWIB) recently embarked on a 10 year strategic plan focusing on quality jobs and skilled workers and contributing to a strong state economy and local prosperity

SB 1566 is a positive change for the OWIB and we are prepared and ready to take on the new authority granted in the bill. For the past year, we have been in conversations with the workforce system stakeholders about redesigning the system to ensure it can produce a highly skilled workforce and help businesses compete in a global economy.

One of the significant challenges in this conversation has been the OWIB facing this enormous responsibility without authority to hold anyone accountable to outcomes. The OWIB is ready, willing, and able to take on a new expanded role that will ensure greater transparency and public accountability for workforce programs.

I urge you to pass SB 1566 out of committee and give those of us representing you on the OWIB the tools necessary to continue to pursue the state strategic plan with the authority needed to hold all parties accountable so that we may all see a more skilled and prosperous Oregon.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jessica L. Gomez", is written over a horizontal line.

Jessica L. Gomez