



Central Oregon Cities Organization

Bend, Culver, La Pine, Madras, Maupin
Metolius, Prineville, Redmond, Sisters

March 18, 2015

Ways and Means Committee
Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
900 Court Street / State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chairs Johnson and Gomberg:

We are writing in support of the critical elements of the Business Oregon budget, SB5525.

Like much of the state, Central Oregon is struggling to recover from the impacts of the recession, and we rely on the collaborative efforts of the Regional Solutions teams and Business Oregon as a key partner in economic development.

As you know, SB5525 Includes funding for the Regional Solutions efforts, which we in Central Oregon have found to be invaluable in creating collaborative resolutions in areas where multiple state agencies have jurisdiction. The co-location of agency staff in offices, and the positive attitudes of the staff in our region, have led to numerous examples of our ability to cut through red tape and move ahead with key development and regional projects. We urge your support for full funding of the Regional Solutions teams, including the two with are currently "limited duration."

We also want to ensure that whatever version of the bill passes includes:

- Funding for Airport/Industrial Park/Ground Lease programs
- Support for general technology for rural areas
- Recapitalization of the Special Public Works Fund
- Continued support for OSU Cascades, a critical regional priority

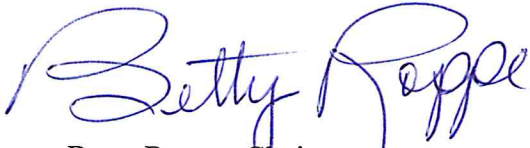
Other bills are important as well, including HB2435, which has been forwarded to Ways and Means. We support the bill and believe that it is a step in the right direction. However, we would like a modification of one particular section of the bill. The "bird in hand" provisions present a logistical time challenge, however for most cities, and place rural Oregon at a disadvantage. We would like to see some flexibility in this area, especially for areas that have large industrial sites already within the UGB but which need infrastructure development to occur in order to receive interest from potential developers.

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In summary, we value the partnership that we have developed with the Regional Solutions teams and with Business Oregon. We support the above mentioned programs, and would be more than happy to answer any questions that you might have.

Sincerely,



Betty Roppe, Chair

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