



thedallesmainstreet.org

April 17, 2015

Representative Caddy McKeown, Chair
House Transportation and Economic Development
900 Court Street
Salem, OR 97304

RE: HB 3526-Oregon Main Street Revitalization Grant Program

Dear Chairwoman McKeown and members of the Committee

I would like to provide testimony in support of House Bill 3526 – the Oregon Main Street Revitalization Program.

As a current board member of The Dalles Main Street Organization and as an economic development professional I've had the privilege to witness firsthand both the complex challenges rural Main Street's face but also the successes which can be achieved through strategic partnerships and investments. After learning of and reviewing HB 3526 I couldn't but think to myself, "what perfect timing for our rural communities!"

In The Dalles, we've seen catalytic projects stall or fail due to a lack of equity that makes them viable. And we see that gap financing is often the difference between downtown vibrancy and blight. However, with strategic investments we know downtown revitalization and property rehabilitation leads to private investment, job creation and retention, and ultimately a stronger tax base. And, sometimes more importantly, develops and instills community pride.

Every rural community faces a unique set of challenges but the common thread amongst them all is resourcefulness. The ability to turn small investments into catalytic projects is a hallmark of Main Street Organizations and makes HB 3526 all the more important. Thank you for your consideration and opportunity to provide testimony.

Regards,

Michael Held
The Dalles Main Street Organization