

April 12, 2017

Senate Judiciary Committee

SB 977

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

For the record, I am Lana Butterfield, representing the Professional Insurance Agents of Oregon and Idaho (PIA). PIA is a statewide association of insurance agents, all of whom qualify as small businesses. I am here to strongly oppose SB 977 on behalf of my members.

This bill cuts the number of months a former employee cannot contact the employer's customers from 18 months to six months. Their customer list is the single most important element of an insurance agency's success, as it is for most small businesses. This bill greatly harms small business.

Insurance laws require agents to receive many hours of education and training. The investment in training from an employer represents at least \$50,000 before receiving a return on their employee investment.

Eighteen months is much better length of time for discussions of customer transitions between ex-employee and employer.

More importantly, the customer is better off with a longer time period, because then he/she is not bothered by the ex-employee's persistent solicitations. If he/she wants, on their own initiative, to seek out the ex-employee, the customer can do that under current law.

PIA encourages you to vote "No" on SB 977.

Thanks for your consideration.

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