

VendEngine

The Honorable Ginny Burdick
Oregon Senate Committee on Rules
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

June 14, 2017

Dear Senator Burdick and the Entire Senate Committee on Rules,

This letter is written with enthusiastic support of HR 3253 and in support of the effort to provide priority status to Blind Entrepreneurs through the Business Enterprise Program in the State of Oregon.

Nearly seven years ago, our state implemented a similar “priority status” in Tennessee, and as a result we have witnessed extreme growth, not only of the BE Program, but also throughout the blind business community. With over \$30 million in annual sales, already we have more than 100 blind managers providing vending services across our state, employing hundreds of individuals and managing dozens of micro-businesses spread across both rural and urban communities. The best part is that the dollars stay in-state and are used to create additional businesses and grow the opportunities for future blind individuals.

As a business service provider to the Business Enterprise Program, I know how successful this enterprise has been first hand, because it has positively impacted not just those blind individuals, who might otherwise find it difficult to own their own business, but also the many businesses that support those programs and initiatives. That is why I am writing to enthusiastically endorse HR3253.

If you have any additional questions or needs, please do not hesitate to contact me at sdeane@vendengine.com or 615-319-6007. I would be more than happy to provide additional information, at any time.

Sincerely,



Silas Deane, President and CEO