



**OREGON SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER NETWORK**  
Helping Build Oregon's Best Businesses  
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## Oregon Small Business Development Center Network Testimony on SB 1516

February 7, 2018

Chair Beyer and Members of the Senate Committee on Business and Transportation,

Senate Bill 1516 is an important step forward to provide additional financing for Oregon's expanding traded-sector small businesses. Small business is big business here in Oregon. More than 90% of firms employ fewer than 50 employees. As you know, these businesses create a big impact on our economy and in our communities.

Oregon's Small Business Development Centers work each day with small businesses looking to expand and grow. To be clear, Oregon's businesses are ready to scale. The Small Business Development Centers, in partnership with Business Oregon, have a special focus on traded sector businesses that are set to expand and need additional support. These programs – SCALE and SCALE Express – help businesses with planning, market research, digital media, import/export planning, mentoring and, importantly, accessing capital.

The Small Business Expansion Loan Fund goes hand in hand with these efforts. This legislation will help small businesses access the capital they need to grow successfully. Our Centers are already working with small businesses that are looking for this type of capital, particularly in rural areas where funding options may be more limited.

As this committee looks at making this program permanent, I would encourage the committee to consider looking beyond early stage companies. In rural communities, there are businesses that are looking to expand and grow that may have an established base. Expanding manufacturing production capacity, purchasing equipment to increase business efficiency or developing a new facility can be just as necessary for a rapidly growing company as well as a startup. An established company may also be growing into a new product line or market to create sustainable, long-term success. Providing access to capital for these types of businesses on these terms where other funding options may not be available can and would provide great value to our communities.

We look forward to working with Business Oregon as this program moves forward.

Sincerely,

Mark Gregory  
State Director  
Oregon Small Business Development Center Network