

3/17/2020

Members of the Oregon Senate and House of Representatives,

I am writing to you today on behalf of my client, the Albany and Eastern Railroad which operates and serves manufacturing clients primarily in rural Linn county, and personally as a resident of rural Oregon.


As you know, rural communities continue to struggle to attract and retain the family wage jobs they were once known for. As such, many of rural Oregon's larger employers - manufacturing, transportation, healthcare, and education among other segments - carry a disproportionately large share of the economic burden for their regions. Their ability to operate, keep folks healthy and safe and/or meet critical financial obligations such as payroll and healthcare costs could mean the difference between a short-term challenge or a long-term health and employment disaster for these communities.

I'm asking that you and the State of Oregon take a proactive role in helping protect the people of rural Oregon and the fragile economies that are still working on finding footing across our state. By adopting common-sense, short-term measures, we can keep manufactured goods moving, keep people employed and earning wages, and as healthy as possible through these challenging times:

- Support the temporary suspension of quarterly tax payments, including payroll taxes, self-employment taxes and all fuel/transportation taxes.
- Suspend the Corporate Activity Tax, or reroute a percentage of collected CAT revenues directly to support affected rural communities
- Accelerate the availability of gap loans or temporary financial investments that can allow companies to operate/hire if necessary to facilitate continued operations

Please consider the steps suggested above as ways that we can limit the effects of this impending crisis on some of Oregon's most vulnerable communities. Rural Oregon looks to your leadership at this important time. What we do today and tomorrow determines our ability to weather this crisis as gently as possible.

Very Truly Yours,



Sean Tate
Tate Public Affairs, for the AERC