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900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

June 22, 2020

Co-chair Senator Courtney, Co-chair Representative Kotek, and members of the Joint Interim Committee:

I am writing today to share my concerns regarding the risks new small business owners face from liability lawsuits regarding COVID-19. As president of Rogue Community College, my concern directly relates to the activities our Small Business Development Center, which has been ranked first in the state for many years. The success of this SBDC in capital formation and job development has fueled successful regional recovery efforts from the Great Recession. We are now focused on recovery from COVID-19 economic impacts.

Our SBDC mission is to create and support new businesses in southern Oregon. Without liability protection for business owners who are following state guidelines to keep their employee and customers safe, the economic growth of our region cannot succeed. Litigious parasites will be empowered to use this opportunity for their own gain at the expense of hard working business entrepreneurs.

Our region relies on small businesses to provide vital goods and services locally. Our college SBDC has a long track record of supporting the successful development of new businesses in our region, and we need to protect them so that they can thrive.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cathy Kemper-Pelle". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Cathy" being more prominent.

Cathy Kemper-Pelle, Ed.D.
President
Rogue Community College

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