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**January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2019**

**Senate Committee on Business and General Government**

**Attn:** Senator Chuck Riley, Chair, Senator Fred Girod, Vice-Chair, Senator Mark Hass, Member, Senator Alan Olsen, Member, Senator Michael Dembrow, Member  
900 Court St., NE, S-303  
Salem, OR 97301

**Re:** SB 258 - Building Entrepreneurial Capacity in Rural Oregon

Dear Honorable Senators Riley, Girod, Hass, Olsen, and Dembrow,

My name is Don Ware and I am the Mayor for the City of Brownsville, Linn County. The City of Brownsville and Linn County have invested in and benefited from Venture Catalyst support from one of the organizations identified in SB 258. I am writing today to ask for your support of SB 258.

The City of Brownsville, Linn County, and other cities and counties in this region have been funding the Venture Catalyst initiative. We have seen **real results** in our community and region from this initiative, including **an increase in: the number of start-ups, the number of living-wage jobs, the amount of revenue generated by these start-ups, and the amount of capital invested in these start-ups.**

Continuing to have a Venture Catalyst in our community that is free to entrepreneurs is an **essential component of our economic development strategy.** We cannot fund this alone, though. We need the State to invest in the statewide Venture Catalyst network to ensure the creation of a culture in Oregon that is conducive to entrepreneurial development and growth.

A statewide network of Venture Catalysts will:

- Provide long-term economic stability and growth for all Oregonians.
- Ensure start-ups will be connected to statewide resources that will help them **start, scale, and stay in Oregon.**

I urge you to support SB 258 to ensure Oregon's *rural* entrepreneurs have access to the same resources that *urban* entrepreneurs have and allow rural communities to be in support of urban population centers.

Yours Respectfully,

  
Mayor Don Ware  
City of Brownsville, Oregon