

January 29, 2019

Honorable Chuck Riley
Committee on Business and General Government
Oregon State Senate
900 Court St., NE, S-303
Salem, OR 97301

Re: SB 258 - Building Entrepreneurial Capacity in Rural Oregon

Dear Senator Riley

My name is Keith Weiss and I am the mayor of Veneta in Lane County. Veneta has invested in and benefited from Venture Catalyst support from one of the organizations identified in SB 258. I am writing today to ask you to support SB 258.

Veneta has been investing into our entrepreneurial ecosystem for the past three years. Veneta, Lane County, along with other cities in our region, have hired a Venture Catalyst position. In the past year, we have seen real results 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 hopefully the amount of capital invested in these start-ups.

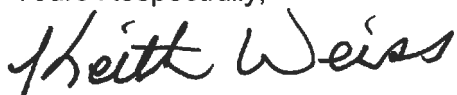
Continuing to have a Venture Catalyst in our community that is free to entrepreneurs is an essential component of our economic development strategy. We cannot fund this alone, though. We need the State to invest in the statewide Venture Catalyst network to ensure the creation of a culture in Oregon that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

A statewide network of Venture Catalysts will:

- Provide long-term economic stability and growth for rural 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. If I can provide additional support or information, please feel free to contact me at kweiss@ci.veneta.or.us.

Yours Respectfully,



Keith Weiss, Mayor
City of Veneta