

January 29, 2019

Re: Testimony on behalf of SB 258: Statewide Rural Entrepreneurship

Dear Chair Riley and Members of the Senate Business & General Government Committee,

The health of the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Oregon is of great interest to the Ford Family Foundation and plays a crucial role in achieving our mission of Successful Citizens and Vital Rural Communities. We know that entrepreneurial ecosystems drive local economic vibrancy and growth, so we seek to support organizations that help build fertile environments for new and growing companies to thrive in rural Oregon.

Four years ago, we created a Community Economic Development Department with the goal of creating vibrant economies in rural communities. As part of our strategy, we have supported and funded Venture Catalyst work in rural Oregon. In rural regions supported by a Venture Catalyst, we have witnessed increased numbers of revenue-generating start-ups that attract capital investment and the creation of living-wage jobs.

As supporters of this work, we are available to serve as an invited resource to you about the value of supporting a statewide Venture Catalyst Network to ensure the creation of a culture in Oregon that is conducive to entrepreneurial development and growth.

Please be in touch if we can be of any assistance to you as you consider any legislative initiatives.

Yours Respectfully,



Anne C. Kubisch  
President