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Testimony regarding HB 2325

Chair Holvey, members of the committee – my name is Ruth Miles. I am Oregon’s Small Business Advocate and I often work with tribes and tribal businesses. I’m pleased to be here to support the work of Representative Sanchez, Senators Roblan and Hansell and Representatives Sprenger and McKeown in identifying potential government efficiencies.

HB 2325 contains two key provisions:

ELECTRONIC NOTIFICATION

The first provision would allow the Corporation Division to email annual notifications to business owners and nonprofits when their annual report and/or registry renewal is due. Currently, these notices are sent through the US Mail.

The business community has requested this functionality for many years, and I’m grateful to the sponsoring legislators for bringing the issue forward for your consideration. We believe that an email will allow for a more user-friendly experience, while reducing the approximately \$400,000 spent each biennium on postage related to this one piece of correspondence. The Corporation Division would provide a paper option for those who prefer it.

TRIBAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The second provision of the bill would allow tribally owned or chartered businesses to register with the Corporation Division in a manner that respects tribal sovereignty. Specifically, the bill would allow tribally owned or chartered businesses to register as a “foreign” entity with the Corporation Division, while paying the domestic rate. The difference in these two fees is \$175 (\$100 for domestic registries and \$275 for foreign).

The types of businesses affected by this provision would include Section 17 corporations, which are chartered only for tribes by the US Department of Interior, as well as entities chartered first through one of Oregon’s nine federally-recognized tribes. Note that assumed business names registered with the Corporation Division have no foreign or domestic designation, so they are not affected.

The legislative sponsors of HB 2325 made it possible to consult with the tribes through the Legislative Commission on Indian Services and their Economic Development Cluster in developing the language of the bill.