

Hello,

I would like to express my support for Senate Bill 418. It is important to maintain funding for university incubator and accelerator programs that allows them to extend their services beyond campus and their immediate community.

The City of Independence has made repeated investments in developing its local entrepreneurial ecosystem, but we do not have the critical mass of people to sustain larger, more intensive business programming like that offered by the OSU Advantage Accelerator. Instead we collaborate with regional partners like the Accelerator to extend some of their services to our community, and send entrepreneurs who are ready for more in-depth support to their programs in Corvallis. Rather than duplicate existing programs, the proximity of the Accelerator and its ability to extend programming outside of Corvallis enables us to maximize the impact of everyone's economic development funding and build regional entrepreneurship more effectively.

Director Karl Mundorff and his staff have been willing collaborators and advisors to Independence's efforts, demonstrating creativity and flexibility in determining how the Accelerator can best support entrepreneurs in the larger region. They are one of a dozen partners that we are currently working with to support a grant to the Economic Development Administration's i6 Challenge to further develop Independence's technology and innovation ecosystem. I understand that this ability to reach beyond Corvallis will be curtailed if SB 418 does not pass, so I want to express the importance of maintaining this capacity. Rural communities rely on regional partners like the Accelerator to support our business development efforts. We simply do not have the local capacity to do it ourselves.

Thank you for your consideration. Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have questions.

Shawn Irvine

Economic Development Director

Office 503.837.1191 | Fax 503.606.3282

www.testdriveindependence.com

INDEPENDENCE
Oregon's Story Begins Here

