



April 25, 2019

To the Honorable Senate Committee on Business and General Government

RE: HB 2454 Relating to regulated professions in the Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region

Snake River Economic Development Alliance (SREDA) is a non-profit, public-private regional partnership that was formed because of the economic adversities we face here in Malheur County and the Western Treasure Valley.

Throughout the years, we have had:

- High unemployment;
- High underemployment – many people work 2 jobs to make a living;
- People leaving their homes to find work or commuting long distances;
- Businesses closing and not reopening;
- Traditionally underrepresented and minority communities;
- Shrinking populations in our rural towns; and
- Malheur County has been ranked one of the highest Counties in the State of Oregon for poverty.

The need for more ‘living wage’ jobs and new investment into our communities is crucial. Our organization focuses on helping existing companies expand and grow as well as recruiting new companies into our area.

House Bill 2454 will have a significant and positive economic impact for Malheur County, Eastern Oregon, and ultimately, the State of Oregon. Malheur County businesses suffer from the competitive advantages of the state across the river. Last year we had over 9 businesses move less than a mile away to another state where they can operate and be competitive within their industry or trade. In a rural area, this is significant.

House Bill 2454 allows out-of-state applicant seeking occupational license in Oregon more time to meet Oregon standards if applicant is already licensed in another state and is seeking to work in Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region. This bill will also provide an opportunity for locals with professional licenses, who are living away from the area for employment, to return home to high paying jobs.

We strongly support this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
*Kit Kamo*

Kit Kamo Executive Director