



April 30, 2019

Kathleen Taylor, Chair
Senate Committee on Workforce
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Please Oppose HB 2408-A

Dear Chair Taylor and Members of the Committee:

Since 2002, Adelante Mujeres has been working to provide holistic education and empowerment opportunities to marginalized Latina women and their families to ensure full participation and active leadership in the community. Our organization provides programming and services covering three distinct areas. Empowerment – in order for communities to thrive it is essential to build communal and individual power for the common good. Education – it is a prerequisite to an engaged community. Enterprise – self and collective initiative, innovation, and integrity are vital for a flourishing society. Some of our programs are possible through partnerships with local governments.

For example, Cocinemos, a program in partnership with the City of Hillsboro, is a 10-week course offered to aspiring entrepreneurs in the community. This course helps Latino entrepreneurs overcome linguistic, financial and cultural barriers to successfully start and grow food-based businesses in Hillsboro. The program includes one-on-one coaching, as well as access to the commercial kitchen at the Hillsboro Community Senior Center to develop their recipes and prepare foods for sale.

The City's investment of more than \$108,000 allowed Cocinemos to impact the entrepreneurship ecosystem by assisting to create businesses, generated new market opportunities, and provided generous opportunities for funding. The Cocinemos program is impacting the region, as demonstrated by the numbers below:

- 37 participants
- 18 new businesses in Oregon
- Total jobs created: 33 Job creation
- Generated 144 new market opportunities

We are concerned that HB 2408-A, as written, poses a threat to the continuation of vital community resources made available due to the Community Service Fee paid by businesses through the duration of the property tax abatement they receive in an enterprise zone. We believe HB 2408-A will deter business investment in enterprise zones leading to declining local revenues to fund Cocinemos and other critical programs that support the Latino community, communities of color, and low-income communities here in Washington County. While we oppose HB 2408-A due to the financial impact it would have on workforce and small business resources in the City of Hillsboro, we are nonetheless concerned about equitable wages to workers. We advocate that the legislature research other ways to ensure that workers in the construction industry are paid fair and equitable wages.

Please vote NO on HB 2408-A.

Sincerely,
Bridget Cooke
Executive Director, Adelante Mujeres