



May 7, 2019

House Committee on Revenue
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 2053A Support – Technical Bill to Align Economic Development Program Standards

Committee Chair Rep. Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Rep. Findley, Rep. Marsh and Committee:

On behalf of EDCO, a non-profit organization focused on the economic prosperity of communities within the Central Oregon region of the state and quality jobs for our residents, I am writing support of HB 2053A because I'm unable to attend today's hearing in Salem. In the record you will find my oral testimony supporting the bill from February 6th following an informational hearing to introduced elements of the bill.

For the past two and half decades, I've managed a variety of economic development programs at the state and local level. These include Enterprise Zones, Renewable Energy Development Zones, Urban Renewals Zones and most recently Opportunity Zones. We've also helped Business Oregon deploy resources around numerous programs including those for infrastructure, business finance, and capacity building. Over the years, the complexity of having different programs all with different measurements and thresholds for employment, wages or compensation thresholds, etc. is problematic. HB 2053A is simply an attempt to provide better clarity and consistency among state programs. EDCO and our peers who form the Oregon Economic Development Association (OEDA) welcome the changes and standardization.

Specifically, several programs use "total compensation" as a criteria for eligibility and ongoing reporting. Including in total compensation are all non-mandatory (state or federal) benefits including compensation through profit sharing, retirement, etc. Placing a monetary value on the sum of these benefits for each employee for each company participating in a variety of programs over time can be both confusing and time-consuming for private companies, economic development managers and state officials tasked with verifying the veracity of the reports. This bill seeks to simplify and streamline that process – saving time and reducing the chances of error for all concerned. Using wage data that can be verified from employment reports, is a more reliable and less subjective measure under which to align these programs.

**Economic Development
for Central Oregon**

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EDCO along with our peers across the state, understand and support performance criteria for economic development programs, including claw backs for non or partial performance. This bill will make them easier to use for companies adding new investment and jobs in our state and it will make our jobs easier to monitor and track progress and claw backs, if needed, moving forward.

Please don't hesitate to contact me should you have questions.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roger J. Lee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Roger J. Lee
CEO

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