

March 3, 2021

Good Morning Co-Chairs Representative Gomberg & Senator Beyer, and Committee Members -

I am Andrea Testi, Director of the Small Business Development Center at Treasure Valley Community College.

For the past twenty years I have had the honor of working in this rural community with entrepreneurs and small business owners, who are as varied and colorful as the majestic Eastern Oregon landscape.

The resiliency of rural Eastern Oregonians was remarkable in 2020. Local businesses adapted daily to the changing business framework; embracing a flexible and innovative mindset to survive. Our business advisors helped clients navigate turbulent waters, provided guidance and clarity, shared worries with them, placated their fears, and guided them on the process of endurance, reinventing, reflection, and sustainability. We were the first call they placed, 24/7, when they needed help and advice.

One-on-one business advisory and mentorship remains the core function of the TVCC SBDC, and the key deliverable that our clients and community continue to request. Our center provided business advisory, technical assistance, and training to over 376 people in Malheur and Harney Counties in 2020. Those clients demonstrated a capital infusion of over \$2.2 million dollars back into our local community.

The TVCC SBDC advisory team has deep roots in our communities. Time invested in one-on-one advisory brings new ideas and commitment to our businesses, increases productivity, and builds the enthusiasm they need to sustain and grow. Whether it is with taxes, financing, marketing, or networking, we provide impact by helping them overcome challenges, discover new opportunities, and close the gap in their knowledge.

Clients were reminded that the decisions that lie ahead of us are as meaningful as they are unanticipated. We assured our community that every small business is essential, and that our job is to help guide our clients through this economic storm. It will be a test for all of us. We have a responsibility to protect and sustain the value we have all built in our businesses and communities.

I have faith that we have a strong future. In moments such as the one we are in now, where character, resilience and courage are tested; holding on to and creating the future is critical. Leveraging your assets by re-investing robust funding in the Small Business Development Center Network is strategically sound. We are a network of 19 integrated SBDC centers statewide with innovative leadership at the network and center levels. We can swiftly, and with proven results, reach every corner of Oregon and every client demographic with expertise, passion, and impact.

Your team at the TVCC SBDC IS OPEN FOR BUSINESS and welcomes the opportunity to help in any way we can. It is my pleasure to have you hear heartfelt stories from our clients during the remainder of these testimonies. Thank you for your time. *Sincerely Andrea Testi*

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