

Dear House Committee on Rules

I am writing in opposition to the Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region.

1. None of the documents establish a firm boundary of where the Eastern Border Boundary resides.
2. The Economic Development Board has not made a firm enough case that there is a special need for hiring priorities. We already know that most of the people who work in Malheur county reside in Idaho. The economic connection between hiring practices and overall regional economic development is nebulous and therefore a waste of time.
3. We already know the entire public sector industry in the State of Oregon has been driven by racial hiring biases. This bill does nothing to address racial inequalities in hiring practices at the state level and will likely exacerbate existing issues.
4. Economic development in Ontario has been driven by records sales in cannabis, hemp and marijuana products. All of these products are illegal in Idaho. So Oregon is a safe haven for access to these goods, which are specifically excluded from this beneficial hiring program.

This is clear indication that this Economic Development Board only wants economic development for industries they support ideologically, not those industries with the highest future hiring capacity. No pun intended.

Therefore I oppose this bill. It is not grounded in equity, it favors prison labor contracts and excludes large chunks of Eastern Oregon, like Klamath Basin, that could also benefit from said preferential hiring practices.

I will oppose all bills that specifically exclude marijuana cannabis or hemp from economic development opportunities.