



McMINNVILLE AREA  
CHAMBER of COMMERCE

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February 18, 2021

Dear Chair Manning and members of the committee,

We are writing today to express our support for SB 531.

The McMinnville Area Chamber of Commerce represents over 450 members (and their 10,000 employees), who are committed to growing business opportunities and providing living-wage jobs for families in our community. We support entrepreneurs and the jobs they create.

This past year has been a difficult one for our business community. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in widespread changes to our daily lives, and ultimately, on our ability to do business. With the onset of COVID-19, Governor Brown issued Executive Order 20-12, which shuttered many of our local businesses in the interest of protecting public health and slowing the spread of this virus. These closures resulted in many businesses suffering extensive losses. It meant laying off employees, losing inventory, losing customers, and for some, it meant losing their business entirely.

Our restaurants and gyms have been hardest hit, as have the countless wineries and tasting rooms in our area (there are 200 wineries within 20 miles of McMinnville). Many of our businesses are on the verge of closing their doors permanently. Three of our restaurants are closed, never to reopen and other hospitality and tourism businesses flounder. There are approximately 1,600 businesses in our community, 36,000 plus, residents, all dependent upon and contributors to our local economy.

When businesses are closed due to public health emergencies like COVID-19, it is important that the state help those businesses recover. Our local businesses are the life-blood of our community and our economy, especially our small and mid-sized businesses, who have shouldered the greatest weight of these closures. We believe it is important for these businesses to be made whole. We support SB 531 for this very reason.

SB 531 would allow businesses to be reimbursed for closures made during emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Businesses sacrificed their livelihoods to protect the health of Oregonians. In turn, we should help these businesses - and the jobs they provide - survive. The future of Oregon depends upon it. We hope you will stand with businesses in this state and support SB 531.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gioia Goodrum'.

Gioia Goodrum  
President/CEO  
McMinnville Area Chamber of Commerce