

February 28, 2021



Senator Lee Beyer
Representative David Gomberg
Ways and Means
Transportation and Economic Development Subcommittee
900 Court St NE, Room H-178,
Salem OR 97301

Re: Support for Oregon's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) funding

To the Honorable Co-Chairs,

The Directors of Oregon's Economic Development Districts request full funding for Oregon SBDCs be restored to Oregon's budget.

The regions we represent throughout the state rely on the SBDC network as a critical hub of economic and business development training, information, funding, liaison, and support. SBDC's staff, programs and services are vital and irreplaceable, particularly in our rural regions. A reduction in services forced by funding cuts would have a devastating effect on our local businesses and economy.

During 2020, SBDCs across the state have infused nearly \$156 million dollars into local businesses, an increase of 144 percent over 2019. They have counseled over 26,000 existing and start-up businesses during this tumultuous time while helping to retain and create 4,000 jobs, an increase of 120 percent over 2019. Statewide SBDCs have held nearly 760 events serving over 12,000 attendees compared with nearly 9,000 in 2019. They have been able to flexibly change their service models and have often times been the only lifeline to small businesses, particularly in rural regions.

We understand that this is a difficult state budget climate. But reducing the state investment in the SBDCs will only further undermine state funding due to lost business development. SBDC has literally provided life support to our businesses and economy. We urge you to restore funding levels to continue this support. As the pandemic continues, this funding is more important than ever.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott Aycock". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Scott Aycock, President, OEDD