

HB 2908 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Economic Development and Small Business

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 1/26

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Appropriates \$10,000,000 to Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD) to develop and implement a process to award grants to small business development centers for purpose of driving economic development and expanding service to small business. OBDD must report to interim committee of Legislative Assembly related to economic development no later than September 15, 2024, on the use of grant funds. Declares emergency, effective upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Business Development Department (OBDD) is the state's economic development agency. Their mission is to invest in Oregon businesses, communities, and people to promote a globally competitive, diverse, and inclusive economy. In addition to their economic development work, Business Oregon oversees the Oregon Cultural Trust, the Oregon Arts Commission, and is the fiscal agent for the Oregon Film and Video Office. They offer over 70 programs including grants for art, culture and business. The Oregon Small Business Development Center Network is one of the programs under OBDD.

The Oregon Small Business Development Network was launched in 1983 and is part of the America's Small Business Development Centers national network. The Oregon Network is a partnership between 17 Oregon community colleges, two state universities, the U.S. Small Business Administration and the OBDD. There are 20 Small Business Development Centers currently in Oregon. They provide services and programs including advising, training, a capital access team, the global trade center, the market research institute, cybersecurity, small business management, resiliency/disaster response, negocios en espanol, and construction contractors licensing.

House Bill 2908 appropriates \$10,000,000 to the OBDD to make grants to small business development centers (SBDC) for the purpose of driving economic development and expanding services to small businesses. Under the measure, a SBDC may be awarded up to \$1,000,000 in grant funds to be used for projects including but not limited to business incubation for targeted industries; acquisition of equipment to ensure greater access to rural Oregon; outreach to businesses that need support during economic recovery; and regional economic development initiative.