



## **OREGON SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER NETWORK**

### **Building Oregon's Best Businesses**

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### **Testimony for SB 5524 and HB 2908**

Co-Chairs Steiner and Sanchez, and members of the committee:

Oregon has been fortunate to have Small Business Development Centers throughout the state since 1983, when the SBA partnered with Oregon to initiate these services on behalf of the state's businesses. Small businesses account for the bulk of the state's employees and almost all of the new hiring since the COVID-19 Pandemic response shuttered so many of our fellow citizens' businesses. Small businesses are pillars of the Oregon business ecosystem and are the backbone of local economies.

The state's SBDC Network is the largest business assistance provider in the state, with 20 regional centers focusing on local business support and training, and ten statewide services that augment local business development. Through this combination of services, businesses are able to access the resources needed to remain competitive in a dynamic worldwide economy. Examples include Global Trade assistance, assistance to businesses looking for expansion capital, market research for organization and market development, and most recently, assistance in business succession planning or assisting in the retention of Oregon's businesses when it becomes time for an entrepreneur to retire and pass the business on to successors.

SB 5524 provides funding for the continuation of the Oregon Small Business Development Center network and for the continuance of the statewide services that are increasingly being relied on by the Oregon business community. The growth and retention of businesses through the Oregon SBDC Network has direct effects on local and state tax revenues, for the stability of property values across the state, and for the employment of the bulk of Oregonians. This work is vital to the health of Oregon businesses.

HB 2908 provides increased resources to a stable network of business assistance providers which provide technical economic development services across Oregon. Through business development activities, entrepreneurs flourish and build communities. Technical assistance services are provided to virtually all Oregon businesses, and the integrity of the program is ensured through Federal, State and institution oversight. The accountability of the program and its successes are measured through client testimonials. The depth of the measurement systems and accountability for the use of funds is unmatched. With the emphasis having been placed on partnership development on regional and statewide levels, the ability to efficiently use funds locally with partnerships is robust.

The SBDC services continue to be directed at helping the Oregon economy grow to remain competitive on a National and World stage. HB 2908 and SB 5524 are two bills that will support these services for the upcoming biennium at a critical time to retain and grow the State's business reserves.

Sincerely,

Marshall Doak, Director  
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Market Research Institute