

May 9<sup>th</sup> 2023

Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Bonham, and Senate Committee on Labor and Business members,

My name is Travis Stovall, and I am the Mayor of Gresham, Oregon. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 3205, a bill to help address workforce shortages and provide much-needed tools to recruit and retain employees. As Mayor of Gresham, I consistently hear from small and medium businesses that one of the significant challenges they continue to face is related to staffing. A critical tool utilized by so many of them during the pandemic and after were bonuses and other creative financial incentives to retain staff. This last fall, those became prohibited, and as a result, many small businesses and workers have suffered.

Two years ago, the Oregon legislature listened to industry, employers, and workers and temporarily removed retention or hiring bonuses from Oregon's Equal Pay Act. Last year again, the legislature extended the exemption, but this extension expired on September 28, 2022. From labor to industry, chamber of commerce, to hospitality, we are all asking for a permanent exemption to stabilize our workforce. House Bill 3205 represents a diverse spectrum of Oregonians from all sectors. It's rare these days to see such a unified and united call for action with broad support and agreement. HB 3205 is an opportunity for our leaders to support a pro-worker, pro-business, pro-Oregon bill as we collectively work to restore a state built for everyone post-pandemic. I urge your support for House Bill 3205.



Travis Stovall

Mayor of Gresham