



Home of the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge

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Testimony for SB 5524 and HB 2908

Date of Testimony: April 8, 2023

Co-Chairs Steiner and Sanchez and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify regarding SB 5524 and HB 2908. I am Bruce Coleman, Economic Development Manager with the City of Sherwood. Sherwood developed primarily as a bedroom community with most of our workforce currently commuting to Portland, Hillsboro and other communities. As a result, the Sherwood City Council has designated economic development as one of our highest priorities – with the focus on encouraging the growth of all types of small and larger businesses and a stronger jobs/housing balance in our community. Sherwood particularly works to foster the growth of entrepreneurship and workforce skills development which are critical to our economic development initiatives.

I have had the great honor of working with the Portland Community College Small Business Development Center (PCC SBDC) over my past 3 ½ years in this position. They have always been available to immediately assist us as we work with early-stage firms and more mature businesses to help them to grow their companies. I have found that the PCC SBDC small business advisors offer extensive experience in preparing business plans, analyzing cash flow, identifying market opportunities, guiding businesses on complex hiring practices, and dealing with intellectual property matters. The PCC SBDC has been my immediate “go-to” business resource provider as the City works to support the growth of our firms. They provide one-on-one business advisory services, classes as diverse as the “getting your recipes to market”, the restaurant-builders program and advanced small business management. The following are examples of some of the support activities that we have found extremely important to our businesses in Sherwood:

- At the very beginning of the COVID-19 public health and economic crisis, we worked with the SBDC to put together training programs for restaurant businesses that were hard-hit by the pandemic.
- The PCC SBDC Capital Access Team conducted cash flow/financing webinars for businesses in Sherwood and other cities in Washington County to help our small business owners to understand the new federal and state COVID-19 financing assistance and recovery programs as well as alternatives sources of capital.
- The SBDC helped a home-based marine-related fabricator in Sherwood to identify government contracting opportunities during the pandemic.

- The Capital Access Team recently helped a local well-established machine shop to obtain advisory services they needed in order to pursue their business expansion plans in Sherwood.
- The SBDC provided guidance to an experienced woman-owned retail toy store owner in Sherwood seeking to renew her lease.
- The Center provided assistance to a small internationally-focused manufacturing company seeking to identify financing opportunities for their expansion in Sherwood
- The SBDC provided advisory assistance to an existing minority-owned truck services and repair business to identify working capital sources for their expansion in Sherwood.
- Last summer, the City of Sherwood worked with the National League of Cities and the Sherwood Chamber to bring the well-regarded Kauffman Foundation entrepreneurship development training program to the Sherwood area and the SBDC provided invaluable guidance to the City as we worked to implement this national program on a local basis.
- The City of Sherwood is currently working in partnership with the SBDC Global Trade Center and the cities of Tigard and Wilsonville to conduct a Portland area small business webinar this month which will help our businesses to identify opportunities to grow locally by learning how to successfully export their products overseas.

We look to the PCC SBDC to provide the practical business advisory services that our small businesses need in order to grow – which is a key goal of the City of Sherwood. This is an important service that helps many small business owners in our area. Portland Community College is also a critical partner for the City as we work to grow our workforce in such technical fields as semiconductors, healthcare, engineering, advanced manufacturing, and construction.

We urge you to fully fund Oregon's SBDC's through SB 5524, HB 2908 and to fully fund Oregon's community colleges. Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

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