

Submitter: Laura Labarre  
On Behalf Of: Duniway Advocacy Committee  
Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1507

I spoke at the hearing in SUPPORT of SB1507 and wanted to add to my comments that I made verbally. Thank you.

During the hearing, I heard a lot of concerns about the impact of SB1507 on Oregon's small businesses. My family includes people who work for credit unions that support the banking a loan needs of many in the small business community in Oregon, and I know small businesses are a core part of our economy and our state's values. After over 12 years working in education policy and observing (and advocating) in the P-20 (aka preschool through college) pipeline that fuels the Oregon workforce, I can say unequivocally that SB1507 will benefit small businesses in Oregon in the long-run. Right now, Oregon schools are floundering. We are not highly regarded on the national stage, and our test scores (and the pitiful length of our school year) back up that reality. As I mentioned verbally, this is down in large part to the scant funding Oregon can currently direct toward our schools. Multiple third party studies have validated the lived experience of educators, parents and most importantly, our children: Oregon is falling short on funding education by a minimum of 33 percent. (This figure taken from the landmark 2025 study conducted by the American Institutes of Research). In my personal opinion, the greatest harm done by this shortfall is the irreparable damage done to the confidence and joy children and youth are supposed to experience in their childhood learning journeys. But economically speaking, I am not sure who will carry on the legacy of Oregon small business if our children don't emerge as adults ready for college and career. Small businesses need customers, consumers can only spend money if they can achieve gainful employment--this is immensely difficult without a mastery of basic education. Small businesses will need leaders, people with the education and confidence to step into existing businesses or start new ones in our state. That isn't possible without a successful P-12 or P-20 education.

Let's not pretend that attaching ourselves to the greedy, top-heavy provisions of the federal H.R. 1 are boon for Oregon's small businesses when it will ultimately lead to their demise. I vehemently support SB1507 and ask our legislators to do the same.