

February 11, 2026

To: Members of the Senate Committee on Rules
Fr: Angela Wilhelms, President & CEO; Duke Shepard, Sr. Policy Director
Re: Support for SB 1501

OBI is a statewide association representing businesses from a wide variety of industries and from each of Oregon's 36 counties. In addition to being the statewide chamber of commerce, OBI is the state affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Retail Federation. More than 75% of our members are small businesses and, together, our members employ approximately 250,000 Oregonians.

Our mission is to create a healthy, prosperous and competitive Oregon today and for future generations. SB 1501 is certainly a part of realizing that mission. You have and will hear from a number of individuals and organizations rallying behind this effort, so we will be brief in our remarks but are proud to stand in solidarity with those working to protect the future of Rip City.

Now more than ever we need to focus on initiatives that can help restore Oregon's economic competitiveness and generate economic activity for years to come. Now more than ever we need to protect and grow what is already here. And now more than ever we need to make smart choices that protect and leverage existing assets and result in real return on investment. SB 1501 is just this.

You have received the data, but to reiterate some of it: over two-thirds of the annual economic and fiscal impacts of the Rose Quarter, about \$370 million, is net new to the economy, even before adding visitor spending, even before visitor spending, and is responsible for nearly 4,000 jobs through operations and visitor spending. That's on top of the millions the Trail Blazers have invested in Oregon nonprofits and schools.

Beyond the direct and indirect economic impacts, the facility gives us so much more. The games, tournaments, concerts, rodeos, community gatherings, festivals and other events that keep the building and surrounding community in action are a key part of the quality of life for the region – and not just for those living in the Portland metro area. People from around the state, and many from outside Oregon, visit the venue. In fact, outside visitors coming to the Moda Center generate \$113 million in activity.

Having an updated, active entertainment venue like the Moda Center matters not just to the people already here, but it matters deeply to companies looking to stay in, grow in or move to Oregon. A modernized venue will allow that to continue. Not getting this done means we would forego obvious economic and long-term financial benefits, but we would also risk a far more significant economic setback and generational community loss.

You hear us often talk about putting down the metaphorical shovel—not digging our hole even deeper as it relates to economic policy, the business climate and improve prosperity and competitiveness for Oregonians and Oregon's employers. SB 1501 is an obvious choice. Construction will lead to the types of holes we want, the physical ones necessary for progress. But not getting this done? That metaphorical hole we talk about may become too deep once and for all.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 1501. We strongly urge support.