



February 25, 2026

To: Members of the Senate Committee on Rules
Fr: Angela Wilhelms, President & CEO
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.

The Moda Center is a publicly owned piece of physical infrastructure that holds value for the entire state, built entirely with private funds 30 years ago. The economic, cultural, and social impact of that private investment should not be taken for granted — and it should be matched with a decisive public commitment to this asset in this legislative session. This represents an opportunity to deliver on the ample pre-session pronouncements about prosperity and turning Oregon's downward economic spiral into a long-overdue ascent.

To be clear, this is about the Trail Blazers. But it is also so much more.

The Blazers put Portland, and Oregon, in the big leagues. They draw visitors and even international attention. They build community, donate philanthropically and generate enormous economic impact that benefits this state as a whole. The Trail Blazers have been one of our state's small handful of recognizable brand ambassadors as the NBA has grown from broadcasting Portland's only NBA title on midnight tape delay to becoming a globally popular sport.

But as I mentioned, this is about so much more. Between now and this session's required sine die, the Moda Center will see one Blazers game. It will also see three arena concerts, a monster truck rally and a WWE Friday Night Smackdown. Look at the schedule — it's remarkable, and it's not just about Portland. People from across the state travel to the Moda Center for these events.

That we have the asset we do in the Moda Center is a gift. To invest in its future is not a giveaway or an irresponsible move. It's a smart play. In the end, this is about doing what we can to sustain and build economic activity, economic vitality and economic prosperity for Oregonians, businesses supported by the Moda Center's ecosystem and the governments — including the state — that receive related tax revenue.

OBI urges the Legislature — as well as the City of Portland and Multnomah County — to get this done before the shot clock runs out.