

Dear Senators Riley, Girod, Hass, Olsen, and Dembrow,

My name is Nicholas Lorenz and I am an entrepreneur in Philomath, Oregon who has benefited from Venture Catalyst support in my community.

I am writing to urge you to support SB 258, a bill to fund a statewide network of Venture Catalysts who would focus on connecting entrepreneurs in Oregon's rural communities—like me—with people, programs, physical assets, and capital.

The name of my start-up company is Nectar creek. We make mead, which is a part of both the Oregon agriculture industry and craft beverage industry. In 2017, I connected with the Small Business Development Center, a Venture Catalyst with one of the organizations identified in SB 258 that would build entrepreneurial capacity and support entrepreneurial growth in rural Oregon by developing regional assets and building a statewide network of resources.

The Small Business Development Center helped me by mentoring, providing resource and connections to get our business to where it is today employing adding 30 jobs to rural Oregon community in 2018.

Having Venture Catalyst support available to me in Philomath has meant that I could get the help I needed to grow my business without having to leave my community. Not only do I get to stay in the city I love, but I also get to contribute to boosting its economy and building the foundation for its future.

I encourage you to support SB 258 to ensure Oregon's rural entrepreneurs—like me—have access to the same resources that urban entrepreneurs have. A statewide network of Venture Catalysts will provide long-term economic stability and growth for all Oregonians.

Respectfully,

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