



## LANE COUNTY Community & Economic Development Division

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125 East Eighth Avenue Eugene OR  
541-682-6503

January 25, 2019

Senate Committee on Business and General Government  
Senator Chuck Riley, Chair  
Senator Fred Girod, Vice-Chair  
Senator Mark Hass, Member  
Senator Alan Olsen, Member  
Senator Michael Dembrow, Member  
900 Court St., NE, S-303  
Salem, OR 97301

### **Re: SB 258 - Building Entrepreneurial Capacity in Rural Oregon**

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

My name is Sarah Means and I am the Community & Economic Development Manager for Lane County. Lane County has invested in and benefited from Venture Catalyst support from one of the organizations identified in SB 258. I am writing today to ask you to support SB 258.

Lane County and other cities and counties in this region have been funding the Venture Catalyst initiative. We have seen real results in our community and region from this initiative, including an increase in: the number of start-ups, the number of living-wage jobs, the amount of revenue generated by these start-ups, and the amount of capital invested in these start-ups.

Continuing to have a Venture Catalyst in our community that is free to entrepreneurs is an essential component of our economic development strategy. We cannot fund this alone, though. We need the State to invest in the statewide Venture Catalyst network to ensure the creation of a culture in Oregon that is conducive to entrepreneurial development and growth.

A statewide network of Venture Catalysts will:

Provide long-term economic stability and growth for all Oregonians.

Ensure start-ups will be connected to statewide resources that will help them start, scale, and stay in Oregon.

I urge you to support SB 258 to ensure Oregon's rural entrepreneurs have access to the same resources that urban entrepreneurs have.

Yours Respectfully,

Sarah Means  
Community & Economic Development Manager