

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 Peter Jenson and I am an entrepreneur in Medford, 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** (mentors & talent), **programs** (workshops & accelerators), **physical assets** (space & equipment), and **capital** (loans & equity).

The name of my start-up company is Erndo. We are disrupting marketing and loyalty for small businesses, empowering them with groundbreaking tools and technology that are otherwise unavailable to them. In 2018, I connected with Rick Hood, 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.

Rick helped us by providing us with introductions to helpful parties as well as by assisting us in refining our pitch.

With Rick's assistance, Erndo has been able to connect with various individuals who have been able to provide expertise in areas such as marketing, branding identity, and investment strategy.

Having Venture Catalyst support available to me in Medford 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,

Peter Jenson