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Dear Chair Holvey and members of the committee,

On behalf of the Bend Chamber of Commerce, our 1,300+ members representing over 25,000 employees, we wish to express our concerns about the impacts of HB 2498. This proposed bill threatens work opportunities and workforce challenges for businesses and entrepreneurs across the state.

Bend is an area where contractors and the remote workforce is a significant part of our workforce and our community relies on independent contractors who utilize this model because we are a smaller community with very high needs for talent and expertise that is not normally available in Central Oregon. HB 2498 discourages entrepreneurship by limiting the earning potential for many Oregonians who are self-employed, including Bend's growing startup community and contract/remote businesses.

The proposed 'independent contractor test' in HB 2498 also threatens existing contracts and work opportunities for businesses that perform work that is similar to the business entity retaining their services. Again, access to a robust workforce in Central Oregon demands that we utilize every tool to ensure our growing business community thrives. This legislation would result in higher taxes and business costs, less flexibility for those seeking self-employment, and impacts to the workforce need.

HB 2498 is unfair and harmful to local business, particularly in areas outside the Portland metropolitan and Willamette Valley. I hope you will support businesses in this state and oppose HB 2498.

Sincerely,

Katy Brooks
CEO