



March 13, 2019

The Honorable John Lively  
House Committee on Economic Development Oregon House of Representatives  
900 Court Street, NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: In Support of Innovation Districts - House Bill 2934

Dear Chair Lively, Vice Chair Lahey, Vice Chair Bonham and members of the Committee:

The Board of the Portland Innovation Quadrant (Portland IQ) enthusiastically supports House Bill 2934, an Innovation Districts Bill for the purpose of hiring staff to coordinate activities related to the organization, administration and staffing of innovation districts.

The Portland IQ is an emerging, innovation district in the city's urban core where anchor educational institutions and companies are clustering to connect with entrepreneurs, startups, incubators and accelerators. The goal of the IQ is to amplify and accelerate these relationships, creating a dynamic, innovation hub that fosters new company formation, job growth and career pathways for local residents. The IQ spans the Central Eastside Industrial District, South Waterfront, and South of Market University District.

The Portland IQ is a recently incorporated 501C3 not-for-profit organization and public-private partnership. A Board of Directors was established in January of 2018 to lead the overall direction and implementation of the IQ's Strategic Plan. Four active workgroups of the IQ have adopted action plans that will deliver upon the goals of the Portland IQ. Each workgroup utilizes an equity lens to ensure that proposed action items deliver on IQ goals of access and inclusion.

- **Career pathways** for the innovation economy--providing clear entry points and access to local students and residents
- **Real estate and business development** -- ensuring affordable space for startups in the IQ balanced by the need for large employers to anchor new, large-scale developments

- **Placemaking** that creates an inviting and inspiring physical landscape for employees, residents, students and visitors to the IQ.
- **Startup resources** to aggregate and make easily accessible the wide array of activities and services available to entrepreneurs and creators in the IQ.

House Bill 2934 will enable the Portland IQ to hire a full-time Executive Director and Program Manager to manage the activities of the IQ. The Portland IQ is one of three innovation districts in the state of Oregon that will benefit from HB 2934. In addition to the Portland IQ, innovation districts are taking root in Bend and Eugene. HB 2934 would enable the formation of a statewide network of innovation districts that will share best practices and learning enabling efficient deployment of state dollars to promote local economic growth and job creation.

In contrast to traditional business recruitment strategies, innovation districts build from existing economic assets, improving the prospects of growth and retention of innovation-related startup companies. HB 2934 builds off successful investments made by Business Oregon and Oregon Inc. to strengthen relationships between the state's research universities, business accelerators and incubators, and entrepreneurs. It promotes a "Grow Our Own" approach to economic development that ensures economic development investments made by the state of Oregon benefit locally owned companies and workers.

The IQ Board of Directors urges the House Economic Development Subcommittee to pass the bill out of committee with referral to the Joint Ways and Means Committee.

We, the undersigned, hereby support HB 2934,

Autodesk  
Beam Development  
Central Eastside Industrial Council  
City of Portland/Prosper Portland  
Greater Portland Inc.  
Oregon Bioscience Association  
Oregon Bioscience Incubator  
Oregon Health and Sciences University  
Oregon Museum of Science and Industry  
Portland General Electric  
Portland Community College  
Portland Incubator Experiment  
Portland Public Schools  
Portland State University  
Providence Health and Services  
Scanlan Kemper Bard

Summit Development  
Technology Association of Oregon  
University of Oregon  
ZRZ Realty

