

March 25, 2019

House Committee on Economic Development
900 Court Street NBE, Room 333
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 3251 Outdoor Industry Competitiveness Fund

Chair Lively, Vice-Chairs Bonham and Fahey:

On behalf of my business partners and the employees of Pistil Designs, based in beautiful Hood River, Oregon, I am writing to express our vigorous support for House Bill 3251.

Pistil was founded, and initially self-funded, in Hood River in 2003 by three friends with the goal of offering a fresh range of branded, fashionable headwear to the outdoor channel. Our product offerings have since evolved from an initial focus on headwear, to now include a diverse offering of scarves, headbands, hand wear and lifestyle bags.

Pistil currently sells its products to more than 1,100 active customers in the U.S. and Canada, and is sold in approximately 1,500 doors. It has proudly remained owner-operated since inception.

Despite our success in scaling the breadth of our business and extending our geographic reach over the past decade and a half, we remain similarly proud to retain a small business culture, run by an employee base comprised entirely of Oregonians who are each active outdoor enthusiasts 365 days per year. We are fortunate to participate in a uniquely collaborative industry that benefits from meaningful ties to the State of Oregon and our authenticity as members of this group has contributed to our success. In short, it is a competitive advantage for us to be an Oregon based business.

During our initial stages of growth, Pistil was fortunate to receive financial support from a small, Hood River-based investor group, which propelled us to our current level of self-sufficiency. We value the prospect of a sustained pipeline for emerging Oregon-based outdoor brands who can benefit from similar, local financial opportunities. Our market position in the outdoor channel, as well as that of our other Oregon-based peers, will only be enhanced by strengthening this pipeline.

Accordingly, we want to offer our voice in support of House Bill 3251, which authorizes the Oregon Business Development Department to make loans and award matching grants to membership organizations and business accelerators in the outdoor recreation industry.

Sincerely,



Darren Glassman
Partner, Head of Sales – Pistil Designs