

TO: Joint Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
FROM: Hasina E. Wittenberg, Special Districts Association of Oregon
DATE: April 2, 2019
RE: **Testimony in Support of SB 5516-BOLI Budget**

Members of the Joint Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. For the record my name is Hasina Wittenberg and I appear before you today on behalf of the Special Districts Association of Oregon (SDAO) and the Special Districts Insurance Services (SDIS) to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 5516. SDIS was formed in the mid- 1980s in response to an extremely adverse public liability insurance market. Currently, SDAO has approximately 956 members statewide and that provide a range of services (including but not limited to water, wastewater, irrigation, parks and recreation, 9-1-1 and rural fire protection) statewide to citizens who reside within cities and in unincorporated communities.

Of the 956 special service districts in our membership, 775 of those districts lie outside the boundaries of Multnomah, Clackamas, Washington, Lane and Marion counties. The Bureau of Labor and Industries' (BOLI) proposed budget recognizes the Business Technical Assistance program as a core division. Fully funding BOLI's budget will result in increased training availability in rural Oregon which is extremely helpful to our membership, assisting our employers to comply with new laws that increase employer obligations. It is important that employers statewide have access to up-to-date training and compliance materials.

In addition, the budget package includes a major website upgrade. Many of our employers are unable to take time to attend employer trainings and participate in outreach programs. Therefore, having a website that is fully functional with information that employers need to comply with statutes and administrative rules is imperative.

On behalf of our membership, particularly our significant and diverse rural employers, SDAO encourages your support of SB 5516.

Please feel free to contact me if you have additional questions.