

May 5, 2019

Dear House Rules Committee Members,

Attention: Chairperson-Representative Paul Holvey,

My name is Michael Talley.

First let me begin by thanking you and the Rules Committee for your service to the citizens of Oregon.

I can imagine that you receive a lot of feedback from your constituents, whether positive or negative. I admire you all for serving the public.

I believe the best part about your position is the opportunity to have a positive impact on so many lives there in the great state of Oregon.

I have some dear friends that live in Oregon, who happen to be Visually impaired or totally blind.

I work closely with blind vendors from all over the United States.

I am a legally blind vendor in Alabama, and I am the Founder of BEST (Business Enterprise Program Support Team), an association that represents and trains blind vendors.

I have been legally blind since birth and I am passionate about assisting blind individuals in becoming independent and employed.

As you may know, 70% of the blind community are unemployed.

There are several reasons for such a high rate of unemployment.

I feel it is crucial that blind individuals have every opportunity possible to become independent and employed. I am not promoting a welfare program, but an opportunity for blind individuals to work and support their family.

I am respectfully asking you to please give every opportunity possible to the blind community in the state of Oregon to have discussions with regards to any possible changes in language that may affect the law.

On behalf of Randolph Sheppard Vendors (blind vendors) from across this country, I am requesting that you please help encourage collaborative conversations outside of the proposed legislative amendments before you, and that METRO, the Oregon Commission for the Blind, and the Business Enterprise Consumer Committee, work to remedy the current issue at hand doing so by way of an Intergovernmental Agreement.

Thank you again for your service and thank you in advance for assisting the Oregon Commission for the Blind and the Business Enterprise Program. Have a great day!!

Best Regards,

Michael Talley
Founder
BEST
Business Enterprise Program Support Team
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