

Thank you Co-chairs and committee members for allowing me this moment. My name is Kyle Lang and I am the Executive Director of the Canby Area Chamber of Commerce.

I represent a coalition of leaders from the regions Chambers of Commerce, but even more important than that, we represent a larger coalition of Clackamas County Businesses, Not-For-Profits, Employers, and their Employees. I am here today to advocate that a portion of the state's ARPA funds be allocated to further assist in the Fair and Equitable Economic Recovery of our Region, Clackamas County, by providing monetary support to the Clackamas County Business Recovery Centers.

The Clackamas County BRCs have already begun the hard and necessary work of providing resources to the businesses of Clackamas County. We provide grant-tracking and application assistance, FREE Business Consulting, FREE Personal Protective Equipment, and more. We have relationships with a wide-reaching and diverse group of individual consultants and business support organizations.

LET ME BE CLEAR about a couple of things. Clackamas County is one of the HARDEST hit regions in all of Oregon after the last year. We have large Metro regions but were too small to receive a direct allocation of CARES dollars to help with COVID recovery. We were one of the areas hardest hit by the wildfires and follow that up with the icestorms, and you have three major environmental events that have rocked our communities.

Couple those needs with a county that is part urban, part rural, highly diverse, a cultural mix of languages and cultures and you will discover a region in need of aid. We need your help to support our mission to Equitably distribute aid throughout our county and to enable us to rebound from a year that continues to pile hardship on our local economies. Through a direct infusion of ARPA dollars, we will be able to expand our translation services to ensure we are reaching ALL residents, plus we can create specialized grant programs that speak to the specific and timely needs of the region we serve. We are ready to do this work. We are already doing this work, and we ask that you prioritize the economic recovery of your neighbors by funding the Business Recovery Center program. We meet many of the Budget Framework criteria you've prioritized in this budget process.

Sincerely,

Kyle Lang
Executive Director
Canby Area Chamber of Commerce