

February 9, 2021

Representative Paul Holvey, Chair
Representative Daniel Bonham, Vice-Chair
Representative Dacia Grayber, Vice-Chair
Members of the Committee

RE: HB 2343 - Relating to local government authority to suspend enterprise zone employment requirements; prescribing an effective date

The enterprise zone program has been an important tool in building and supporting the Central Oregon economy. By encouraging investment and employment growth, the enterprise zone has helped to create a balanced economy while building a stable long-term tax base for the local community and the state of Oregon.

The provisions in HB 2343 would provide temporary relief from the devastating impact of the COVID-induced decline in employment. Without this waiver for meeting required employment thresholds, many employers would be forced to pay substantial unplanned property taxes at a time when cash flows are most challenged. Despite the efforts of these employers, the previous employment gains generated in the enterprise zones could be lost, potentially permanently, with the compounding negative effect on future employment, capital investment, and tax revenues.

We are strongly in support of HB 2343, refined to provide immediate effect, as it would prevent additional financial burden to employers during this critical period of economic recovery.

Respectfully,



Don Myll
Bend Area Director



**Economic Development
for Central Oregon**

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