



February 5, 2021

Dear Chair Manning and members of the committee:

We are writing today to express our support for SB 531.

The Canby Area Chamber of Commerce represents over 250 members who are committed growing business opportunities and providing living-wage jobs for families in our community. We support entrepreneurs and the jobs they create.

This past year has been a difficult one for our business community. The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in wide-spread changes to our daily lives, and ultimately, on our ability to do business.

With the onset of COVID-19, Governor Brown issued Executive Order 20-12, which shuttered many of our local businesses in the interest of protecting public health and slowing the spread of this virus. These closures resulted in many businesses suffering extensive losses. It meant laying off employees, losing inventory, losing customers, and for some, it meant losing their business entirely.

Our fitness organizations, hospitality businesses, and personal care services have taken a drastic hit as the result of strict restrictions. Our former member, The Fitness Place, which provided individual and group fitness instruction and injury recovery services, was forced to close their doors after more than a decade of service to our community. In addition, we've seen multiple closures for those organizations who were able to persist through these hard times at a tremendous cost to the businesses, the individuals who own it, and the employees who represent the workforce employed by these amazing local employers.

When businesses are closed due to public health emergencies like COVID-19, it is important that the state help those businesses recover. Our local businesses are the life-blood of our community and our economy, especially our small and mid-sized businesses who have shouldered the greatest weight of these closures. We feel it is important for these businesses to be made whole. This is why we support SB 531.

SB 531 would allow businesses to be reimbursed for closures made during emergencies, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Businesses sacrificed their livelihoods in order to protect the health of Oregonians. In turn, we should help these businesses - and the jobs they provide - survive.

We hope you will stand with businesses in this state and support SB 531.

Sincerely,

Kyle Lang
Executive Director
Canby Area Chamber