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March 11, 2023

The Honorable Paul Holvey, Chair & Honorable Members
House Committee on Business and Labor
Oregon State Capitol, Salem, OR

Re: Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 3205

Dear Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Roseburg Area Chamber of Commerce, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support for HB 3205.

As you are aware, during the pandemic the Oregon legislature temporarily removed hiring and retention bonuses from Oregon's Equity Pay Act, to support employers facing workforce shortages. This action allowed businesses to pay retention and recruitment bonuses to help manage the workforce shortage. The temporary exemption expired in September of last year. However, workforce shortages continue to be one of the most significant post-pandemic challenges facing Oregon businesses, particularly in rural Oregon.

HB 3205 would exempt hiring and retention bonuses from the Equal Pay Act. Passage of HB 3205 would give Oregon businesses an important tool not just to attract needed new employees, but retain current employees. Passage would not only positively impact employers, but also positively impact employee morale. This is principally important to Oregon's rural communities; communities, where even in the best economic times, are significantly challenged to compete with urban areas for quality employees.

Retention and recruitment bonuses are an important strategy businesses use to attract and retain employees in every state in the country, except Oregon. We respectfully request the committee move HB 3205 forward and give Oregon businesses the necessary tools to recruit and retain employees in order to keep our local economies strong.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to comment, for your consideration and for your service to Oregon.

Best regards

ROSEBURG AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Debra L. Fromdahl".

Debra L. Fromdahl
President & CEO



*To advocate for and be the voice of the business community in the greater Roseburg area.
To strengthen, enhance and protect our members through political advocacy, economical development, community promotion and member programs and services.*