



March 21, 2023

Chair Bynum, Vice Chair Morgan, Vice Chair Nguyen and Members of the House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business

Re: House Bill 3431 – Support, Economic Equity Investment Program (EEIP)

Chair Bynum, Vice Chair Morgan, Vice Chair Nguyen, and Members of the Committee. For the record, my name is William Miller (Blackfeet/ Cherokee) and I have the honor of serving as the Executive Director of the NAYA Action Fund located in Portland. Founded by the community, for the community, the NAYA Action Fund is a 501(c)(4) social welfare organization with a mission to expand political advocacy and build electoral power in partnership with the Native community in Oregon and Washington. Our vision of systemic change is youth centered, family driven, and elder guided. I write in support of House Bill 3431.

The Economic Equity Investment Program (EEIP) proposed in HB 3431 is a vital step towards achieving economic equity and justice throughout Oregon. This legislation aims to establish a program that provides access to capital and other resources for individuals and businesses that have been historically excluded from traditional funding sources. The EEIP would create a permanent fund to support small businesses and entrepreneurs from underserved communities. The program would provide technical assistance, training, and financing to help individuals and businesses grow and thrive.

This legislation is particularly important because access to capital has been a significant barrier for people of color, women, and other marginalized communities as they grow their businesses. The EEIP will address these systemic inequalities by creating opportunities for communities to access capital and resources they need to succeed. Additionally, the EEIP will not only help individuals and businesses but will also strengthen the overall economy of Oregon. Small businesses are the backbone of our economy and supporting them will create more jobs and promote economic growth and prosperity.

The Economic Equity Investment Program (EEIP) proposed in HB 3431 is a critical step towards achieving economic equity and justice in the state of Oregon. The program will provide much-needed resources and support for individuals and businesses that have been historically excluded from traditional funding sources. On behalf of the NAYA Action Fund, we urge you to support this important legislation and make economic equity a reality for all Oregonians.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "W. Miller", is written over a light blue circular stamp.

William Miller  
Executive Director