



March 23, 2023

Chair Kathleen Taylor
Vice-Chair Daniel Bonham
Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Business

RE: Support for SB 1047

Chair Taylor & Members of the Committee:

As you know, Washington County is the second largest county in the state of Oregon, with over 600,000 people residing within the County. Since 1990, the county's population has nearly doubled in size, and this growth has made us one of the most rapidly growing and most diverse counties in the state. Washington County is working on increasing opportunities for historically disadvantaged communities to work with and for the county by increased outreach to minority owned businesses and working to reduce barriers to access. However, we also need help from the state to increase the effectiveness of our efforts.

Allowing for the increase thresholds and promotion of Certification Office for Business Inclusion and Diversity (COBID) certified suppliers aligns with our progression to embed equity in Washington County Procurement Rules. Currently, due to ORS 279 restrictions, we can only direct appoint contracts for goods and basic services up to \$10,000 which is not enough to cover most projects. The increase to \$25,000 allows us to direct appoint larger contracts to COBID firms which in turn allows those businesses to grow. Opportunities for larger contracts may also encourage others to seek certification.

As we continue to engage the supplier community and centering their experiences, we hear the need to support the COBID program by encouraging suppliers to become certified. Currently, there is not enough incentive for businesses to go through the lengthy and complicated certification process. Legislation that supports the engagement with COBID suppliers will have downstream effect of increasing the COBID supplier pool.

Therefore, we request that the committee support SB 1047.

Sincerely,

Erin Doyle
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