

April 23, 2023

THANK YOU for the privilege of bringing you testimony today:

My name is Cheryl Cruson, previous co-owner with my husband of [Oregon Trail Hobbies & Gifts](#) a full line hobby shop where ***“We sell serious fun!”*** We had the pleasure of owning this business of for decades and in 2021 worked closely with the SBDC to create our succession plan and in selling the store to the new owner. We remain involved with the SBDC in our other businesses and through their Veteran Small Business Management monthly cohort meetings.

When we first returned to Ontario in 1976, we took a basic business course thru the SBDC that helped us create a business plan and become familiar with Oregon business regulations. We ran an irrigation pipe plant for 40years installing systems with a payroll providing jobs for up to 20 people at a time. Over the years we have called on the folks at SBDC numerous times to help with employee matters, worker’s comp questions, bonding, and accounting challenges and even succession planning. Sometimes it is as difficult to close or sell a business as to *start and keep one going*. I have been privileged to serve on the local advisory committee as well as the state advisory board. At one time I was elected to go to Washington DC to represent our center at a national conference. I have often referred friends and customers to our local folks without hesitation, knowing they would get help and advice needed.

Living in the FRONTIER of Oregon we don’t have the resources for the kind of help that is available in larger communities, so we ***rely*** heavily on ***Andrea and her team of experts at the Treasure Valley Community College Small Business Development Center***. We are grateful for the many relationships we have developed over the last 45 years of being in business and would ask you to support full funding for such a critical service to our community. Thank you again for your time and commitment. We appreciate what you do.

Cheryl Cruson

former owner of OREGON TRAIL HOBBIES & GIFTS

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