



**Testimony in Support of HB 5030,
Restaurant Incubator Initiative
Khanh Le, Unite Oregon
May 05, 2023**

Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of our 46,000 members in support of House Bill 5030, specifically Unite Oregon's Restaurant Incubator Initiative. My name is Khanh Le and I am the Executive Director at Unite Oregon. Our organization is led by black, indigenous, people of color, immigrants and refugees, rural communities, and people experiencing poverty, working to uphold an intercultural movement for justice.

Of our many chapters across the state, Multnomah County has grown the fastest over the last 20 years. Many community members have been displaced from the urban core. This is harmful to these communities' ability to generate and retain wealth. We believe Portland needs a bold vision for economic justice that uplifts all communities, especially those historically excluded from wealth opportunities.

Unite Oregon's *Restaurant Incubator Initiative* aims to address the lack of affordable housing and economic opportunity by uplifting wealth creation and asset retention through community and civic engagement. Today, it takes at least two minimum wage jobs to keep up with 1-bedroom housing and basic needs in Oregon. We want to empower East Portland communities to construct a sustainable and comprehensive economic ecosystem, herein referred to as the *International District*. We propose acquiring a restaurant with a commercial kitchen, walk-in freezer and other restaurant tools to build and rebuild the loss of small retail restaurants, food carts, and catering businesses during COVID. This approach creates a long-lasting wealth strategy for community members, entrepreneurs, and former small businesses through an international district community and food epicenter in the 24th Senate District. The hub will integrate food, event space, small business education and training for community members and youth in the food and restaurant sector. We are already investing \$600-thousand and are asking for 1.275-million to fully fund the program.

East Portlanders deserve economic justice. Unite Oregon asks you to support our membership by voting to include Unite Oregon's *Restaurant Incubator Initiative* in House Bill 5030.