



Date: February 5, 2024

To: Chair and members of House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business
From: Scott Bruun, VP Government Affairs, OBI
RE: Support for HB 4101 / Voluntary Business Registration

Good afternoon, Chair Bynum and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 4101.

My name is Scott Bruun, and I am the VP of Government Affairs for Oregon Business & Industry, or "OBI." OBI is a statewide business association representing businesses from a wide variety of industries from each of Oregon's 36 counties. In addition to being the statewide chamber of commerce, OBI is the state affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Retail Federation. Our 1,600+ member companies, more than 80% of which are small businesses, employ more than 250,000 Oregonians. OBI's primary mission is to strengthen the business climate in Oregon.

Oregon has several challenges which impede the state's ability to gather and use business and economic information in a manner that would assist in promoting business formation, business growth, entrepreneurship, or wealth creation. OBI believes strongly in these core economic development principles, and we believe that HB 4101 is a necessary tool to help bridge the current gap.

HB 4101 would be a voluntary system, established by the Secretary of State's office, to gather and track important information around ethnicity, gender, and veteran status, and then consensually share that information with state agencies including small business development centers. This information, in turn, could be used to proactively communicate with and support businesses toward advancing individual business and employee success while also promoting wider economic development goals.

We believe this program would be beneficial to Oregon's existing and perspective minority-owned, women-owned, and veteran-owned businesses in Oregon. In short, this is good for Oregon small business and we urge your support.

Thank you.

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