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January 24, 2025

Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: SB 546 - Modernizing signature collection for Oregon Charitable Checkoff Program participation

Dear Chair Meek and Committee Members,

The Elakha Alliance respectfully requests your support of SB 546 with a do pass vote at the hearing scheduled for January 27, 2025. The purpose of SB 546 is to modernize the signature requirement for qualified charities to receive contributions during tax filing by means of checkoff through the Oregon Charitable Checkoff Program (OCCP).

We work alongside many outstanding Oregon-based 501(c)3 organizations that enrich lives, engage community, and build vitally needed resources for the people of Oregon. Nonprofits serve our state in unique ways that cannot be replicated by the government or by the private sector. Maintaining and enhancing the strength of Oregon's charitable sector is more important today than ever.

The current requirements of the Oregon Charitable Checkoff Program (OCCP) are inequitable, inefficient, and onerous; no new charities have been added by the program in almost ten years. The last charity to apply and be accepted by the OCCP Commission did so not through a grass-roots method, but by contracting with a paid signature collection service, demonstrating the impractical nature of the current rules. Current estimates for hiring contractors to secure the required 10,000 in-person signatures range \$100,000 to \$200,000 or more. For the Elakha Alliance, these funds can be better used, and are needed, to complete mission critical work that will improve Oregon's coastal environment and provide benefits for Oregonians for generations to come.

I urge you to support this bill that will benefit Oregonians.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jane Bacchieri
Executive Director