

Submitter: Hyon Chol Kahng
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Commerce and Consumer Protection
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2966

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2966, which establishes the State Public Finance Task Force. This bill is crucial for exploring innovative public finance solutions in Oregon.

Currently, local governments often rely on bonds from large Wall Street banks, which can inflate project costs by 30-50% due to high interest rates and fees. This drains public funds and removes capital from the state's economy. HB 2966 seeks to address this by exploring alternatives, including public banking.

This task force will examine how to better manage public funds and support local communities. It will study options to strengthen local financial institutions like credit unions and community banks, potentially through secondary loan markets and depository services. This can boost their lending capacity and ensure their viability as key partners in Oregon's financial ecosystem.

HB 2966 can also address the barriers to affordable homeownership. By exploring participatory loans with local banks, the task force can offer more favorable terms than large banks, contributing to community stability and generational wealth.

Furthermore, it can lower the cost of infrastructure development by working directly with local financial institutions, ensuring that public funds are used more efficiently and that profits stay within the state.

The task force will also consider how public financing can stimulate broader economic growth, including supporting small businesses, creating jobs, and providing affordable student loans. It will explore a green bank to capture federal funding for environmental projects.

This bill emphasizes transparency and public control, ensuring that any public financing entities are operated for the public benefit. By bringing diverse stakeholders to the table, the task force will develop solutions that benefit Oregon's economy and residents.

HB 2966 is an important step towards a more resilient and equitable economy for Oregon.