



January 28, 2025

To: House Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection
From: Oregon Financial Services Association
Re: Opposition to HB 2966, Relating to a Public Finance Task Force

Chair Sosa and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Financial Services Association is a trade association for the consumer credit industry in Oregon, founded in 1937 to promote safe, ethical lending to responsible, informed borrowers and to improve and protect consumer access to credit.

OFSA writes in opposition to House Bill 2966, establishing a State Public Finance Task Force. The concept of public banking is not new. It has been unsuccessfully considered numerous times by the Oregon legislature in previous decades, and further study is not necessary now.

Oregon's rich ecosystem of banks, credit unions, non-bank lenders, public/private partnerships, and community development financial institutions provide extensive banking services and loans throughout the state. These institutions have access to funding that is leveraged to provide billions of dollars of credit in Oregon annually.

For example, many non-bank lenders, like OFSA members, consistently provide qualified consumers with reliable, traditional installment loans that are accessible and affordable, giving borrowers a tried-and-tested mechanism to safely manage their household credit. OFSA members serve consumers of all economic backgrounds, including under-banked consumers in large and small communities throughout the state.

In addition to direct lending, there are numerous organizations and public/private partnerships that provide or leverage additional credit, including Business Oregon, federal organizations like the Small Business Administration and the Department of Agriculture, and community development financial institutions like Craft3, MESO, and other non-profits.

With these existing organizations in place, the focus should be on supporting their efforts rather than elongating discussions of models that could duplicate, and threaten access to, services already available. Now is not the time to spend scarce taxpayer resources studying the creation of an unnecessary new public entity. We urge you to vote no on HB 2966.

Sincerely,

Maureen McGee
Lobbyist, Oregon Financial Services Association

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