



March 6, 2025

TO: Members of the House Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection

FR: Derek Sangston, Oregon Business & Industry

RE: Opposition to HB 3255

Chair Sosa, Vice-Chair Osborne, Vice-Chair Chaichi, members of the House Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection. For the record, I am Derek Sangston, policy director and counsel for Oregon Business & Industry (OBI).

OBI is a statewide association representing businesses from a wide variety of industries and 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. Oregon's private sector businesses help drive a healthy, prosperous economy for the benefit of everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in opposition to HB 3255. OBI opposes HB 3255 because the bill would place substantial administrative and financial burdens on Oregon businesses that operate predominantly online, and especially some of its smallest retailers. The bill would also likely have the effect of decreasing customer service in certain circumstances by imposing strict, but at times inefficient, requirements on businesses trying to resolve customer complaints.

By requiring businesses to list a "permanent" phone number and email address, and respond to customer complaints within 24 hours, HB 3255 would require businesses to make significant investments to expand their staffing, make technological upgrades, and provide near-constant support. Those investments would disproportionately disadvantage small online retailers and startups, and could redirect business investment to states other than Oregon.

Additionally, by requiring a "permanent" phone number, HB 3255 would make Oregon the only place in the country requiring businesses to keep a permanent phone number for centuries on end. Businesses regularly change business models, get acquired, or simplify customer service methods for customer ease. By requiring a "permanent" phone number rather than just a phone number, HB 3255 would not allow businesses adjust to the rapidly changing market or evolve to meet customer demand.

While most retailers already provide a phone number and email address so customers may contact them, HB 3255's provisions requiring businesses to maintain those points of contact imposes an overly prescriptive approach that does not consider modernization or technology. For instance, by focusing customer complaints to a business' phone number or email, HB 3255 would significantly limit the ability to offer a live chat feature. By likely funneling all customer concerns to a phone number or email address instead of other methods that have been demonstrated to

provide an easy way for customers to resolve their complaints, HB 3255 would also lead to delays, confusion, and even more generic or automated replies. Likely leading to diminished instead of improve customer interactions.

For those reasons, I request that this committee not move HB 3255 forward. Thank you for your consideration.

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