

Heppner Community Foundation
188 W Willow Street
PO Box 14
Heppner, OR 97836

Re: Letter of Support – Business Oregon Rural Opportunity Initiative

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means and Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development,

The Heppner Community Foundation (HCF) has had the privilege of being a recipient of a Rural Opportunity Initiative (ROI) grant, administered by Business Oregon. This grant award has had a profound impact on our rural communities in Eastern Oregon.

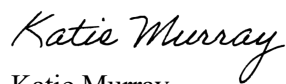
HCF is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization established to support economic opportunity and innovation in South Morrow County. In addition to managing community spaces and a business innovation hub, HCF is a guiding and mentoring force working to cultivate and sustain the spirit of its frontier small business owners and entrepreneurs. As a ROI community, HCF has seen incredible progress toward this goal.

With Business Oregon ROI:

1. In partnership with the Heppner Chamber of Commerce, HCF now supports over 35 rural entrepreneurs with a space to sell their artisan goods in a Main Street storefront.
2. Over \$30,000 in retail sales from this project have gone directly to our entrepreneurs in less than 6 months – this profound impact keeps economic investment in Eastern Oregon.
3. Twelve small businesses have directly benefited from technical assistance programs (business plan development, financial planning, marketing and advertising)
4. Two entrepreneurs have started new businesses.
5. HCF can bring valuable resources directly to our community: one small business owner received over \$4,000 in Economic Equity Investment Program (EEIP) dollars that she would not have otherwise been able to apply for or have knowledge of without support.

Your strong support of the Rural Opportunity Initiative is greatly appreciated and its impact in rural Oregon is tangible every day. Thank you for your continued work for all Oregonians.

Sincerely,



Katie Murray
Director of Administrative Services
Heppner Community Foundation