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Written Testimony of J.D. Tovey
Executive Director, Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation

Before the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development - In Support of House Bill 5024

Co-Chair Woods, Co-Chair Gomberg, and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development,

My name is J.D. Tovey, and I serve as the Executive Director of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR). I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of House Bill 5024, which provides essential funding to Business Oregon and ensures the continued success of programs like the Oregon UAS Accelerator.

Through Business Oregon's support, the Oregon UAS Accelerator has not only helped small business startups drive innovation in autonomous aerial and robotic systems—it has also created significant workforce and economic development opportunities for the tribal community.

We deeply value the opportunity for tribal interns to be involved in the accelerator, gaining hands-on experience in cutting-edge technology sectors that are shaping the future. These internships provide our students and young professionals with the skills and industry exposure needed to pursue careers in unmanned systems, robotics, and advanced manufacturing—fields that are critical to the long-term economic sustainability of our community.

Additionally, the work being done at the Oregon UAS Accelerator aligns with CTUIR's vision for advancing economic self-sufficiency and sovereignty through technology-driven industries. The collaborations fostered through the accelerator—between tribes, local businesses, and industry leaders—are building a stronger, more resilient regional economy that benefits all Oregonians.

Without continued funding through House Bill 5024, these opportunities for tribal participation, workforce development, and technological advancement could be severely limited. Business Oregon's investment in this program is not just about supporting startups—it is about ensuring that underrepresented communities, including tribal nations, have equitable access to high-growth industries.



The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation strongly support House Bill 5024 and urge the committee to sustain this critical funding. Thank you for your time and for your commitment to strengthening economic opportunity and innovation across Oregon.

Respectfully submitted,

John D. Jovey "J.D."
Executive Director

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation