

TRAVIS NELSON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
HOUSE DISTRICT 44
NORTH/NORTHEAST PORTLAND



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Testimony in Support for Senate Bill 1110

Chair Taylor, Vice- Chair Bonham and Members of the Senate Committee on Labor and Business,

My name is Travis Nelson, and I am the State Representative for House District 44, and it is with immense joy that I testify with in support of SB 1110, this bill provides \$8.75 million for the Williams & Russell Business Hub in the Albina neighborhood of North and Northeast Portland. This funding is a crucial step in a long-overdue effort to restore economic opportunity and justice to a community that has faced decades of displacement.

The land has officially been transferred from Legacy Health to Williams & Russell CDC, and on February 28th, Governor Kotek, Senator Frederick, Congressman Blumenauer, and many others – including myself – joined the community to commemorate this milestone at the official groundbreaking.

The history is for all of us to share. For more than 50 years, this site has stood vacant as a painful reminder of the destruction of the Hill Block and the displacement of Black families in Albina. But we have an opportunity to turn that history into a future of empowerment. The Williams & Russell project is not just about development, it is about restorative justice for Black communities. It will create accessible homeownership, affordable apartments, a public plaza, and a business hub that will serve as an economic catalyst for the community.

Committee, we all recognize the weight of the choices before you and the reality that resources are finite. Every dollar must stretch to meet pressing needs across our state. But some investments have the power to create lasting, regenerative change and this is one of them.

Economic opportunity is a critical piece of justice. Small businesses are not just economic engines. They are anchors for community, foundations for culture and an insulator for resilience. This business hub will do more than offer resources, mentorship, and support—it will rebuild what was lost. It will empower entrepreneurs, uplift families, and spark growth that ripples far beyond what words, or any number can fully capture.

This is a moment of healing, of reclaiming what was lost, and of building a future rooted in justice. Investing in this hub means investing in the long-term vitality of the Albina neighborhood, ensuring that future generations have opportunities that were once taken away. It is a chance to turn past harm into future prosperity. I urge you to support this funding—not just as an allocation, but as a commitment to a stronger, more just Oregon.

Thank you.

State Representative Travis Nelson
House District 44, North/NE Portland