

Submitter: Bryson Baker

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Judiciary

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB698

I write in opposition to SB 698, a bill that, while well-intentioned, presents significant challenges that could negatively impact businesses, consumers, and regulatory efficiency in Oregon. While I recognize the bill's goal, the approach it takes is flawed and may create unintended consequences that outweigh its benefits.

1. Increased Regulatory Burden and Costs

SB 698 imposes additional compliance requirements that will disproportionately affect small businesses and local enterprises. Many businesses already face stringent state and federal regulations, and adding more layers of oversight will increase administrative costs, legal fees, and operational expenses. These costs will inevitably be passed down to consumers in the form of higher prices, creating a burden on Oregonians—especially those in lower-income communities.

2. Negative Impact on Consumer Choice and Access

By enforcing new restrictions or mandates, SB 698 could limit the availability of certain products or services. Businesses may decide that the additional compliance costs are too high and either stop offering certain options or leave the Oregon market altogether. This is especially concerning in industries where access to essential goods and services is already limited.

3. Unintended Consequences for Employment and Economic Growth

Oregon's economy thrives on innovation and entrepreneurship. Excessive regulation, such as that proposed in SB 698, discourages investment and expansion, leading to job losses or slowed job growth. Employers forced to comply with cumbersome requirements may reduce hiring, cut employee hours, or relocate to states with more business-friendly policies. At a time when economic recovery is crucial, this bill could stifle progress rather than support it.

4. Potential for Bureaucratic Overreach and Inefficiency

Government agencies already struggle with enforcing existing regulations efficiently. Adding new, complex requirements will strain resources, potentially leading to inconsistent enforcement, delays, and confusion for both businesses and consumers. The bill lacks clear guidelines on how compliance will be monitored and enforced, increasing the risk of bureaucratic overreach and arbitrary penalties.

5. Alternative Solutions Should Be Considered

Rather than implementing SB 698 in its current form, a more balanced approach should be pursued. This could include:

- Strengthening education and voluntary compliance programs instead of imposing heavy-handed mandates.
- Conducting further economic impact studies to ensure that businesses and consumers are not unduly harmed.
- Collaborating with industry stakeholders to develop practical, effective policies that achieve the bill's intended goals without unnecessary hardship.

Conclusion

While I appreciate the effort to address the concerns that SB 698 seeks to remedy, this bill is not the right solution. It imposes unnecessary costs, restricts consumer choice, harms small businesses, and risks economic downturns. I urge the committee to reject SB 698 and instead work toward policies that support both Oregon's economy and its residents in a more balanced manner.

Thank you for your time and consideration.