



April 28, 2025

Written Testimony Opposing SB 781

Chair Meek and Members of the Committee,

My name is Stacie Wyss-Schoenborn, and I am the President/CEO of Central Willamette Credit Union in Albany, Oregon. I am here today to express my strong opposition to Senate Bill 781.

Central Willamette, with our ten full-service branches and 153 employees, serves over 37,000 consumer and small business members throughout the Willamette Valley. It is my honor to serve our state as a governor-appointed member of the Business Oregon Commission, as well as a current elected member of the Linn Benton Community College Board of Education. Additionally, I serve on the Albany Area Chamber of Commerce Board and the Good Samaritan Hospital Foundation Board.

Central Willamette is a certified Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI) through the US Treasury CDFI Fund. This program is designed for institutions with a mission to promote economic and community development in low-income and underserved areas. We are proud to be one of only fifteen CDFI-certified credit unions in Oregon, supporting underserved communities with access to affordable financial services. Notably, there are no Oregon banks with CDFI certification. The ability for CDFIs to fulfill their mission would be severely hampered by additional taxation.

**SB 781 would require credit unions to pay state taxes on loans and services provided to businesses when a bank chooses to sell assets to a local not-for-profit financial cooperative.** This is a solution in search of a problem. There have only been three such transactions in Oregon—one completed and two pending. Meanwhile, banks have closed 388 branches in Oregon over the last 15 years, a 35% reduction, and out-of-state banks now hold 77% of bank deposits in our state.

Credit unions play a vital role in providing affordable and accessible financial services to Oregonians, especially in rural and underserved communities. If credit unions are disincentivized from considering the purchase of bank assets, consumers may experience reduced access to services, higher fees, and diminished financial inclusion. In many cases, credit unions are the only financial option left when banks leave.

**The reality is that most of these transactions are initiated by banks themselves, seeking the best outcome for their customers and communities.** Credit unions that purchase banks are more likely to keep branches open, protect employees' jobs, and maintain a community-focused approach. No bank is ever forced to sell to a credit union; in fact, small community banks often choose credit unions as buyers because of our shared commitment to community investment and job protection.





Since 2012, only 78 banks nationwide have chosen to sell to a credit union—just 0.6% of total bank sales. In Oregon, these are rare, community-preserving acquisitions, not aggressive expansions. In contrast, 2,499 banks have sold to other banks in the same period.

**SB 781 would hurt Oregonians by:**

- Making it harder for credit unions to serve members, especially in rural and low-income areas.
- Reducing options for consumers and small businesses, potentially leading to more banking deserts.
- Punishing not-for-profit, member-owned cooperatives and the communities they serve, while providing no clear economic benefit or significant new revenue to the state.

Oregon credit unions delivered \$229 million in direct financial benefits to the state's 2.3 million credit union members in 2023. In banks, those funds would go to Wall Street profits instead of Oregon residents.

Central Willamette is grateful to this Legislature for making Oregon a leader in financial accessibility. The cooperative movement embodies the “people helping people” philosophy. Consumers and business owners have options in financial services, and credit unions are a big part of helping to secure the financial futures of the Oregonians we serve.

**I urge you to vote NO on SB 781.** Let's keep financial services accessible, especially for the people and places that need them most.

Thank you for your consideration.

*Stacie Wyss-Schoenborn*  
President/CEO  
Central Willamette Credit Union

