

The South Coast Development Council's mission is to promote and support businesses that provide quality jobs through responsible development on Oregon's South Coast.



Joint Committee On Ways and Means,
SubCommittee On Transportation and Economic Development

Re: HB 5025 REDI/ROI Funding

The Honorable Senators Johnson, Hansell, Monroe, and The Honorable Representatives
Gomberg, Meek, Nearman, Noble, Reardon:

50 Central Avenue, Suite A
Coos Bay, OR 97420
541 266-9753
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The Rural Entrepreneurship Ecosystem Framework(REEF) project in downtown Coos Bay is a unique opportunity to create a facility directly focused on business development in our rural Oregon community. This project could not have been undertaken without the support of the Rural Entrepreneurship Development Initiative(REDI) or Rural Oregon Initiative(ROI) and Business Oregon. The ROI is a vital partner to the economic success of this project. The REEF will be a collaborative, "one-stop", regional South Coast effort of 11 collocated partners dedicated to stimulating and supporting entrepreneurs and small businesses through business development, mentorship, and education. The REEF will also house space for an incubator, commercial kitchen, and co-working desks to nurture regional entrepreneurial development and increase interaction among local entrepreneurs and business professionals. In addition, our REEF will connect new entrepreneurs and business expansion opportunities with the statewide virtual incubation program(VIP).

The Rural Oregon Initiative has provided the REEF with startup capital as well as direct access to statewide experts such as Amy Pearl of Hatch, who has proved herself invaluable to our process. Additionally, the ROI partners in Baker City, La Grande, and Klamath Falls, who are also focused on creating unique business development facilities, now have access to an extensive network of economic development professionals from across the state. This interaction allows for the free-flow of information and collaboration among regional rural communities and dense urban cities. All to the end of bringing new jobs and investment, not just for an individual region or municipality, but for all of Oregon.

As noted above, this facility, once complete, will connect virtually to ensure entrepreneurs have access to educational seminars and classes thus furthering the available knowledge of those who participate in the program. This will greatly reduce both the financial opportunity and transportation costs many rural entrepreneurs face living in isolated regions around the state.

The South Coast Development Council enthusiastically supports the proposed investment for the REDI/ROI program. This investment is vital to both our South Coast region as well as other rural communities in order to foster long term sustainable growth in regions of chronic high unemployment and declining natural resource industries.

Sincerely,

John Hitt
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Sponsor Investors:

Bandon Dunes Golf Resort ❖ Bay Area Hospital ❖ City of Coos Bay ❖ City of North Bend ❖ Coos County
❖ Coquille Economic Development Corporation ❖ Curry County ❖ Jordan Cove Energy ❖ Oregon International Port of Coos Bay ❖
❖ Southwest Oregon Regional Airport ❖