



HOUSE MAJORITY OFFICE

SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Joint Ways & Means Passes Bills to Increase Small Business Investment and Create Jobs

SB 1017 and HB 3698 will increase the availability of working capital for small businesses

SALEM – The Joint Ways & Means Committee today passed two bills to increase small business investment and create jobs. Oregon Democrats have made creating jobs and making Oregon an attractive place to open and grow small businesses their top priority for the February Special Session. SB 1017 and HB 3698 both increase the availability of working capital for small businesses in the state.

Senate Bill 1017, called the Access to Business Capital Act (ABC Act) gives small businesses better access to the capital they need through the Oregon Business Development Fund and the Oregon Entrepreneurial Development Loan Fund. Senator Suzanne Bonamici (D-NW Portland/Washington Co.) and Representative Margaret Doherty (D-Tigard) worked together on the legislation, which is a key part of both the House and Senate Democrats' agendas for the February session.

"The ABC Act helps community businesses by making it easier for them to access small business loan programs," said Bonamici. "This bill will provide additional flexibility to get money out the door more quickly for companies that need help."

"Small businesses are having a really hard time accessing the capital they need to grow their businesses in this tough economy," said Doherty. "This bill will increase access to funds for the small businesses that are the backbone of our economy and the engine of our recovery."

Nearly 60 percent of Oregon Business Development Fund loans are made in rural areas of Oregon, giving help to small businesses who need capital to expand and grow and helping create jobs. The Oregon Entrepreneurial Development Loan Fund helps small businesses get off the ground by providing start-up funds and has been one of the most successful tools the state has in targeting loans to women, with over 36 percent of the existing loans being made to women-owned businesses across the state.

HB 3698 creates the Building Opportunities for Oregon Small Business Today Fund (BOOST Fund) to increase the availability of working capital to Oregon small businesses that create jobs and hire Oregonians to fill them.

“We hear time and time again that the biggest obstacle small businesses face to creating jobs is a lack of access to working capital,” said House Democratic Majority Leader Mary Nolan (D-SW Portland). “This bill changes the game by providing capital for small businesses that are dedicated to creating new, full-time jobs in Oregon.”

To qualify for BOOST funds a small business must demonstrate a reasonable capacity to increase employment, establish a goal of creating new full-time jobs in Oregon with a reasonable prospect of achieving such goals, and demonstrate a history of providing comparable wages to its employees.

SB 1017 now heads to the Senate floor for a vote, while HB 3698 moves to the floor of the House.

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The Senate Democratic Agenda can be found at
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/senatedemocrats/Feb2010Agenda.pdf>

The House Democratic Agenda can be found at
<http://www.leg.state.or.us/housedemocrats/>