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December 3, 2020

To Honorable Oregon Congressional Delegation:
Senators Ron Wyden, Jeff Merkley and Congressman Peter DeFazio,

It is critical that Congress pass pandemic relief for small businesses and families before the end of this year. We know that enacting a bill will require bipartisan compromise. The release of a proposal from a bipartisan group of Senate and House members as well as the revisions to the Senate GOP proposal provide an opening to break the current impasse.

We encourage you to: (1) push for a bipartisan agreement that can pass this year and (2) ensure that as the bill is drafted the PPP provision provide for support for all non-profits including 501(c)(6)s and the liability provisions provide meaningful protection like Senators Cornyn’s and McConnell’s Safe to Work Act.

The cost of Congress failing to act could be catastrophic for Oregon. According to recent Census Bureau polling:

- 29.9% of Oregonians expect to [lose employment income](#) in the next month
- 7.2% are either [not current on their rent or mortgage](#) or have little confidence they can make next month’s payment
- On December 26, [unemployment benefits](#) for approximately 67,866 Oregonians will expire.
- This last month more small businesses in Oregon have [reduced](#) employment (16.1%) than [increased](#) employment (3.0%).
- Nearly 43% of Oregon small businesses saw a [drop](#) in revenue last month.
- 69% of Oregon small businesses [received assistance through the Paycheck Protection Program](#).
- But nearly all have exhausted their PPP funding and nearly 30% [expect](#) to need additional financial assistance in the next six months.

Under Governor Brown’s statewide “Freeze” and subsequent safety risk mandates, small businesses in 25 of our most populated counties, including Lane County, have been forced to significantly reduce business hours, restrict operations, or close altogether. This through the most critical holiday season, and in fact for a prolonged and indefinite period of time.

Oregon is a Small Business State. Many businesses will not survive. The health and welfare of our families and communities cannot thrive without them. Your efforts to complete a pandemic relief bill prior to the end of the year will save countless small businesses and families across Oregon.

I plead for your support on behalf of the Board of Directors and the 750 small business and non-profit members of the Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce.

Respectfully,

Vonnie Mikkelsen, President and CEO