JUNE 2026

OREGON PROSPERITY COUNCIL

Recommendations for Oregon's Long-Term Competitiveness & Prosperity

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Prosperity Council prepared this report for Governor Tina Kotek with support from Council staff and consultants at ECOnorthwest and Gard Communications. The Council is grateful to the many Oregonians who shared their ideas, concerns, aspirations, and lived experiences throughout this process. These recommendations are stronger because of your participation, and we thank you for the time, expertise, and perspective you contributed to service of Oregon's future.

OREGON PROSPERITY COUNCIL

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose & Charge

Governor Tina Kotek established the Prosperity Council in January 2026 to advise her on near- and long-term strategies for advancing the goals outlined in her Prosperity Roadmap.

The Council was charged with advancing recommendations to improve Oregon's business climate, strengthen its workforce, and modernize the tools needed to support growth. The Council's work aims to help Oregon retain and grow existing businesses, attract investment, expand economic opportunity, and ensure prosperity is shared across all regions of the state.

Underlying this work is the recognition that lasting prosperity comes from increasing productivity, innovation, and investment, which will enable Oregon's economy to generate greater value over time. The Council focused on policies that not only support economic growth but also ensure the benefits of that growth are broadly shared through rising wages and improved quality of life for Oregonians at all income levels.

Process & Engagement

The Council developed its recommendations following an extensive statewide process designed to capture perspectives from businesses, workers, community organizations, local governments, economic development partners, and other Oregonians. Throughout its work, the Council, the Governor's Regional Solutions team, the Chief Prosperity Officer, and many other leaders convened public meetings and held listening sessions across the entire state. The Council engaged stakeholders individually, reviewed letters and solicited input through a statewide survey. Together, these efforts generated thousands of comments and recommendations from participants representing diverse geographies, industries, and perspectives. This feedback helped shape the recommendations in this report.[1]

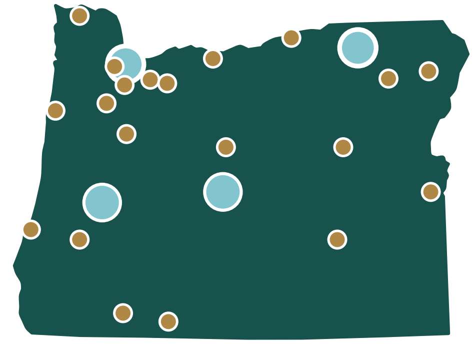
66 LISTENING SESSIONS IN **25+** OREGON COMMUNITIES

45+ SUBMITTED LETTERS REVIEWED

1,000+ STATEWIDE SURVEY RESPONSES

1 See Appendix A. Engagement Report, Appendix B. Survey Questions, Appendix C. Survey Responses, Appendix D. Facilitator's Guide, and Appendix E. Submissions and Feedback

The Council also met five times between January and June 2026 to learn about Oregon's economic conditions and competitiveness challenges. They heard directly from businesses and community leaders in Redmond, Pendleton, and Eugene, examined best practices from other states, and discussed how this input aligned with members' own priorities and values. These working sessions, including one virtual session, allowed the Council to evaluate policy options, consider tradeoffs, and refine the recommendations.



PROSPERITY COUNCIL MEETINGS
PLACE-BASED LISTENING SESSIONS

Prosperity Council working session locations included Portland, Pendleton, Eugene, and Redmond, as well as virtually. Place based-listening sessions were held throughout the state in-person and virtually.

Meeting Oregon's Moment

Oregon is at a critical inflection point. The state has extraordinary strengths, including world-class natural resources, innovative small- and medium-sized businesses, founder-led enterprises, family farms, hospitality businesses, entrepreneurial talent, and globally competitive industries that create local jobs, drive tourism, and shape the cultural identity of communities across the state, but its economic future is increasingly uncertain. Over the past decade, rising costs, slowing population growth, declining competitiveness, and fragmented policymaking have made it harder for small and medium-sized businesses to invest, communities to thrive, and Oregonians to access opportunity. Addressing these challenges will require more than incremental policy changes; it will require confronting structural barriers that limit growth, innovation, and government effectiveness. Too often, Oregonians are paying more while feeling they receive less in return. Without meaningful change, Oregon risks falling into a cycle of economic stagnation, declining public confidence, eroding services, and fewer pathways to upward mobility.

TOP CHALLENGES

49th
IN THE NATION
% change in non-farm employment
▶ **2nd worst in the nation**
(US Bureau of Labor Statistics)

41%
OREGONIANS LIVING BELOW THE ALICE THRESHOLD
Either living below the Federal Poverty Level or unable to afford basic expenditures in the community where they live
(ALICE Threshold, Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed)

5.2%
OREGON'S UNEMPLOYMENT RATE
▶ **Above national rate of 4.3%**
(US Bureau of Labor Statistics)

The Prosperity Council believes Oregon can and must pursue a more ambitious future. Prosperity requires bold leadership, accountable government, strong educational outcomes, a competitive business climate, and an economy that creates family-wage jobs and opportunity across the state. Incremental change will not be enough to meet the scale of Oregon's challenges. The recommendations that follow are intended to help the Governor and Legislature take urgent, coordinated action to modernize Oregon's systems, improve competitiveness, and position the state for long-term growth, innovation, and broad-based prosperity shared by Oregonians at every economic level.

A Choice to Grow

Oregon's economic future is not guaranteed. Without stronger leadership and better coordination across government, the state risks missing a generation of growth and opportunity. Oregon has fallen behind many of its competitors on key measures of economic competitiveness, while businesses and residents face rising costs and increasing uncertainty. The result is a growing sense that Oregonians are paying more but receiving less, threatening the state's ability to support businesses and create pathways to prosperity. Future growth will depend on doubling down on entrepreneurship, startup formation, and business expansion, while ensuring that companies can invest and grow in Oregon.

Priority Recommendations

The Council identified 10 priority recommendations to advance Oregon's economic competitiveness and long-term prosperity. The state's success will be measured on rising incomes, quality job creation, improved educational outcomes, and stable public revenues. The full report provides more detail and additional recommendations across five topic areas:

10 PRIORITY RECOMMENDATIONS

1 **Transform Business Oregon into the Oregon Commerce Authority**, governed by a board of business and innovation leaders and the Governor and modeled on best practices for statewide economic development organizations. The Governor must ensure effective personnel and board members lead the transformation and the agency.

2 **Strengthen Oregon's economic competitiveness with tax policies** that are more pragmatic and in alignment with neighboring states, while supporting innovation, business growth, and higher-wage job creation and moving the state toward a more balanced system. **Near-term reforms should include:**

- **Modernize the Research & Development tax credit** to expand eligibility and encourage university partnerships, with a key focus on small and medium-sized businesses.
- **Update the Estate Tax** with an emphasis on supporting family-owned businesses.
- **Reform the Corporate Activity Tax (CAT)** to reduce administrative burdens on small and medium-sized businesses while maintaining overall revenue levels.
- **Reconnect the Qualified Small Business Stock (QSBS)** policies to the federal tax code to help Oregon retain and grow emerging businesses.

3 **Convene a nonpartisan, stakeholder-balanced, tax reform working group to develop a long-term reform proposal** that can be implemented by 2029, in advance of the expiration of federal State and Local Tax (SALT) provisions. The group should consider how to restructure the Corporate Activity Tax, enable local governments to evaluate options to increase stability with common sense property tax funding, and rebalance the personal income tax structure to maintain progressivity and reduce effective rates for all income brackets.

4 **Establish enforceable statewide permitting timelines and guardrails (a "shot clock")** by requiring agencies to approve or deny complete permit applications within clear statutory timelines, while maintaining environmental and safety standards.

5 **Reduce regulatory and administrative burdens by 20% by 2029.** Remove outdated and duplicative regulations, which will improve government efficiency and should reduce government spending. The state should also establish a regulatory structure to ensure reforms support economic growth while maintaining protections for public health, essential services, and the environment.

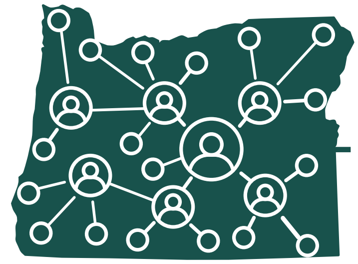
6 **Adopt a market-based Cap and Invest program for greenhouse gas emissions.** Upon implementation, the Governor should repeal the Climate Protection Program. Align Oregon's program with labor standards consistent with California and Washington's Cap and Invest approaches: auction revenues allocated for public works and infrastructure should require family sustaining wages, registered apprenticeship participation, and adherence to nondiscrimination and workforce inclusion standards.

7 **Establish a dedicated and recurring site readiness and infrastructure fund of $250 million per biennium.** Oregon cannot compete for jobs or build enough housing without a reliable supply of development-ready land. Using bonding authority tied to future economic growth, the state should accelerate investment in sites to prepare them for development.

8 **Modernize statutes and state policies governing land intended for industrial and business growth** to reflect site suitability and ensure an adequate supply of development-ready sites to support target industries. Clear standards for industrial site readiness, including site size, configuration, natural features, road and other infrastructure access, power sufficiency, and location should ensure consistent interpretation across jurisdictions.

9 **Establish a Governor's Cabinet of Economic & Talent Development** to align state agencies around measurable economic, education, and workforce outcomes. Lead and implement a statewide Talent Alignment Strategy to establish ambitious statewide goals tied directly to Oregon's long-term competitiveness while finding opportunities to streamline and consolidate.

10 **Strategically align higher education funding with West Coast states** to strengthen Oregon's workforce, research, innovation, and industry partnerships in high-growth sectors. Also, commit $20 million per biennium to the University Innovation Research Fund (UIRF) to leverage federal investment and commercialization opportunities.



Call To Action

The Prosperity Council urges the Governor and Legislature to move quickly in advancing the recommendations outlined in this report. Throughout this process, Council members consistently heard from stakeholders across Oregon that the state's economic challenges require urgent action and sustained leadership. While these recommendations reflect months of discussion, research, and collaboration, the Council recognizes that their value will ultimately be measured by implementation and results.

We are grateful to Governor Kotek for her leadership in convening this effort and creating a forum for candid dialogue about Oregon's future. With this report, the Council has fulfilled its charge. We now look to the Governor and Legislature to build on this foundation, prioritize near-term actions, and advance a long-term agenda that strengthens Oregon's competitiveness, expands opportunity, and delivers prosperity across the state. Council members stand ready to support implementation efforts in any way that may be helpful.

Throughout this process, Council members consistently heard from stakeholders across Oregon that the state's economic challenges require urgent action and sustained leadership.

Clockwise from upper left: Prosperity Council held a Listening Session in Portland, Oregon; Prosperity Council and Governor Kotek meet with Southern Willamette Valley Business Leaders; Business Roundtable in Redmond, Oregon; and Prosperity Council visited Pendleton's UAS testing facility.

Images courtesy of the Prosperity Council.

FULL REPORT

OREGON PROSPERITY COUNCIL

Recommendations for Oregon's Long-Term Competitiveness & Prosperity

PILLARS OF PROSPERITY

In Oregon, we know the power of coming together to make bold choices that reflect our shared values and benefit all Oregonians. It's how we have become known over the years for our natural resources, innovative businesses, and strong communities. And it's exactly what the Prosperity Council is here to do, and why we as its members signed up for this work.

Today, Oregon's economic future is uncertain, and we are in danger of missing an entire generation of growth and prosperity. We have lost sight of what it takes to set up our state for success: strong vision and coordination at all levels of government. As a result, the state is struggling under the weight of overlapping and constraining policy decisions, keeping us at the back of the national pack on critical measures like education, taxes, and regulation. Too often, Oregonians are paying more while feeling they receive less in return. Costs are rising, businesses are stalling or leaving, and too many Oregonians are struggling.

> It's time for urgent action to bridge our differences and fix what's not working to put Oregon back on a path to prosperity.

At the same time, population growth has slowed, employers are finding it harder to invest and expand, and many communities are seeing fewer opportunities for workers and families. If Oregon does not change course, the state risks slower job growth, stagnant incomes, increasing pressure on public services, and fewer opportunities for people to build a better future for themselves and their children.

It's time for urgent action to bridge our differences and fix what's not working to put Oregon back on a path to prosperity. Incremental change will not be enough. Oregon's challenges now require solutions equal in scale, and our leaders must be willing to pursue reforms that improve accountability, modernize government, and ensure public resources are delivering measurable results for Oregonians. The recommendations in this report reflect a practical, results-oriented approach focused on proven strategies and meaningful outcomes rather than ideology, with the goal of moving the needle on the issues that matter most to Oregon's future.

▶ **Prosperity means more than growth alone.** It means small businesses, entrepreneurs, family-owned businesses, and larger employers can create more and better-paying jobs. It means our public agencies are fiscally stable, and everyone has access to high-quality education, healthcare, and other essential services. It means an economy that works for people across the state, including employers, small business owners, and workers. To do that, we need to align and streamline our systems, while staying true to the core values that define our state and make us special.

▶ **We must change our economic trajectory.** To be among the leading states in the next decade of prosperity, we need to take advantage of our location, resources, and talent in areas that are poised for growth.

▶ **This is an inflection point for Oregon, and our leaders must rise to meet it.** We cannot continue to foster a culture of ambivalence about growth, and we cannot take growth for granted. We must choose every day to nurture and support our business ecosystem.

The Prosperity Council calls on our Governor and the Legislature to adopt a more audacious vision for Oregon's future, one grounded in jobs growth (including support for entrepreneurs and for the expansion of existing businesses), accountability, competitiveness, innovation, and broad-based prosperity. The state's economic challenges are significant, but so is Oregon's potential, if leaders are willing to act boldly and with urgency.

The following recommendations are a result of a statewide effort to listen, synthesize, and share the views and real concerns of Oregonians. The Council has worked hard to achieve balance in our recommendations between immediate fixes and longer-term systemic changes to keep Oregon relevant and prosperous into the future.

OREGON IS POISED FOR GROWTH & NATURAL LEADERSHIP

Sectors include:

AGRICULTURE, FOOD & BEVERAGES

FORESTRY & WOOD PRODUCTS

APPLIED/PHYSICAL AI
Including semiconductors and robotics

SPORTS & OUTDOOR INDUSTRIES
Including apparel, spectator events, and tourism

LIFE SCIENCES & CLEAN ENERGY TECHNOLOGIES

Purpose and Process

The Oregon Prosperity Council developed its recommendations through a statewide engagement process designed to gather input from a broad cross-section of Oregon businesses, community organizations, public agencies, educational institutions, workforce partners, tribal governments, and residents. The engagement effort combined multiple methods to capture both structured and qualitative feedback, including a public survey, facilitated listening sessions, and written submissions. The public survey generated over 1,000 responses from participants representing nearly every county in Oregon, while more than 60 listening sessions were held across all eleven economic development regions in the state. In addition, stakeholders submitted over 45 letters representing advocacy organizations, industry perspectives, and community leaders points of view.[1]

The Council's engagement process used common discussion questions and frameworks across all engagement activities. Feedback was organized around key themes related to Oregon's business climate, workforce, and economic development tools, then analyzed to identify recurring priorities, areas of consensus, and differing view points. This process provided the Council with a strong foundation of stakeholder input that supplemented their own individual outreach. Together, this information was used to inform recommendations and ensure they reflected opportunities and aspirations expressed by communities and employers across the state.

1 See Appendix A. Engagement Report, Appendix B. Survey Questions, Appendix C. Survey Responses, Appendix D. Facilitator's Guide, and Appendix E. Submissions and Feedback

Statewide Economic Development Strategy & Structural Reform

FOCUS: Tools for Growth

FOCUS
Tools for Growth

Statewide Economic Development Strategy & Structural Reform

Background and Problem Statement

In many states, economic development is established as a top priority and reinforced through consistent leadership from the governor's office. This "tone at the top" sets direction, aligns agencies and partners, and provides businesses with a clear, consistent signal that the state is focused on supporting investment and growth.

More than 850 organizations make up Oregon's **economic development system**, all broadly focused on business growth and job creation. However, consistent collaboration around shared priorities is the exception, not the norm. For businesses of all sizes, this fragmentation can make it difficult to identify a clear entry point, navigate available programs, or receive coordinated support. At the same time, Business Oregon manages more than 90 legislatively directed programs without a clear mandate or sufficient political support to lead a strong, coordinated statewide strategy. This limits the state's ability to respond quickly and effectively to business needs, particularly for larger or time-sensitive investment opportunities.

Summary of Stakeholder Feedback

Oregon's economic development functions are viewed as underperforming relative to peer states, lacking clear and sufficiently resourced priorities, alignment, and the ability to say yes and move quickly. Stakeholders appreciate Business Oregon's entrepreneurship and capital access programs, alongside foundational tools to support regional and rural economies. Others point to a lack of responsiveness, limited ability to influence peer agencies, small scale of programs, and diffuse focus. The Semiconductor Task Force provides a template for the type of collaborative, cross-functional approach necessary to support target industries statewide.

Shared Vision

Oregon's economic competitiveness is restored through institutional reform, culture change, and strategic clarity. A high-performing, aligned economic development system, anchored by a modernized economic development agency with durable private-sector engagement, enables impactful interventions and leverages strong partnerships. Oregon is a competitive, welcoming place for entrepreneurs, small and medium-sized businesses, and major employers to start, grow, and invest, with a system that is responsive, easy to navigate, and capable of supporting projects at the speed and scale required in today's economy. Prosperity reaches households across the state.

Priority Recommendation

Following best practices in other states, Oregon should enhance the public and private sectors' role in economic development with the following changes:

- Oregon needs a lead agency in economic development oriented toward statewide vision, accountability, and leadership in the economy to restructure the way it delivers economic development. The state should transform Business Oregon into the **Oregon Commerce Authority**, governed by a board of business and innovation leaders and the Governor and modeled on best practices for statewide economic development organizations. The Governor must ensure effective personnel and board members lead the transformation and the agency.

The transition will consolidate and integrate Business Oregon's economic and community development functions with workforce, energy, innovation, research, and other key functions into the new Commerce Authority. It should improve program delivery, service standards, response times, and accessibility for small and medium-sized businesses, as well as large strategic employers. The Authority should establish measurable statewide economic development goals and maintain a public-facing dashboard tracking key metrics such as business growth, job creation, project timelines, regional investment, customer response times, and economic competitiveness outcomes to improve transparency and accountability. Given the scale and complexity of this transition, the Legislature should authorize planning and implementation resources in the next biennium to begin the organizational development work necessary to establish a Commerce Authority and to ensure that the work of the Prosperity Council continues.

BEST PRACTICES

The Arizona Commerce Authority and North Carolina Department of Commerce offer examples of integrated economic development governance models. Arizona's public-private authority structure emphasizes executive leadership, private-sector participation, and organizational agility. North Carolina complements a similar partnership-oriented approach with responsibilities spanning community development, rural economic development, workforce strategy, and energy policy, creating a more comprehensive framework for statewide competitiveness.

Additional Recommendations

- **Complete and implement a statewide economic development strategy** with measurable job and income growth goals, a focus on business retention, expansion and attraction, targeted support for small businesses, a sophisticated approach to target sectors and generative artificial intelligence. Align with workforce development, infrastructure, and innovation priorities. Engage small and medium-sized businesses, entrepreneurs, and rural communities in developing the strategy and identifying target industries.
- **Prioritize catalytic public-private partnerships** that can serve as the foundation for emerging innovation districts, unlocking long-term economic growth and traded-sector employment through state investments on the order of $10 million per project (e.g. Confluence Innovation Campus in Portland, the Southern Willamette Valley Innovation Corridor, and industrial site development in Eastern Oregon). These investments should align with programs that accelerate innovation and commercialization partnerships statewide.
- **Establish a Governor-directed economic development concierge function through the Regional Solutions Program and Regional Development Officers**, with clear expectations that state agencies actively support priority projects, coordinate across jurisdictions, resolve barriers, and facilitate timeline solutions that advance local and regional economic development priorities. This effort should ensure that projects of strategic importance receive visible executive action and coordinated state support from initial engagement through project completion.

Taxes

FOCUS: Business Climate

FOCUS
Business Climate

Taxes

Background and Problem Statement

Oregon's tax structure must be competitive to attract, retain, and support high-wage job growth. It is one driver, among several, that are critical in creating an environment where workers and employers can thrive and where the economy can prosper. Small and medium-sized businesses are particularly affected by compliance complexity and layered local tax burdens, including income, business, property, and special-purpose taxes, which together create uncertainty and increase the cost of investment. The current state tax structure places a higher burden on middle-income households than all of our neighboring states. This structure underpins the state's lack of competitiveness and limits its ability to balance budgets, sustain essential public services, and invest in long-term economic growth.

Under current state and local tax structures, including income and sales taxes but excluding property taxes, a single filer earning $40,000 in Oregon faces an effective tax rate[1] of 20.4%, compared to 18.4% in Washington and 19.9% in California. Similarly, a household earning $80,000 has an effective tax rate of 17.6% in Oregon, compared to 16.0% in Washington and 17.0% in California.[2] These differences demonstrate that Oregon's comparatively higher tax burden is not limited to high-income earners; it affects households across the income spectrum. Even seemingly small differences in effective tax rates can translate into meaningful annual costs for Oregon residents. When combined with Oregon's housing affordability challenges and other rising costs of living, these higher tax burdens can further reduce disposable income and make it more difficult for households to achieve economic security and upward mobility. See Appendix F for additional information.

EFFECTIVE TAX RATE: Single filer earning $40,000

20.4%	18.4%	19.9%
OREGON	WASHINGTON	CALIFORNIA

Summary of Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholders consistently identified Oregon's tax structure as a barrier to business growth and competitiveness. They noted that the combined impact of state and local taxes discourages business investment and growth, particularly for small and mid-sized firms, a critical segment of the economy given that 97% of businesses employ fewer than 50 people and collectively support 52% of employment statewide. While the Corporate Activity Tax provides stable revenue, its broad application across supply chains can create cumulative tax burdens, especially for traded-sector

1 The effective tax rate is the actual share of income, property value, or business activity that is paid in taxes after accounting for deductions, exemptions, credits, and other tax rules.

2 See Appendix F for scenarios analyzing additional filing and earning characteristics to estimate effective tax rates including estimates of sales tax in neighboring states.

industries. At the same time, stakeholders emphasized the need to maintain stable, predictable funding to support top public priorities such as education, healthcare, and other core services. Stakeholders also highlighted the importance of ensuring government spending is efficient, transparent, and aligned with outcomes. Any reform must balance stable public funding with policies that strengthen Oregon's long-term economic competitiveness.

Portland-Specific Issues

Layered local income taxes combine to make marginal tax rates for households uncompetitive with adjacent counties and states. Over the past three years, Multnomah County lost $3.5 billion in personal income through out-migration to other counties and states, including nearly $730 million to Clark County in Washington (Vancouver). The net effect undermines the region's job creation priorities, weakens overall economic competitiveness, and results in lost revenue for needed public services.

Portland Metro stakeholders noted challenges with overlapping local income taxes, structured sunset reviews for new tax measures, and higher signature thresholds for tax-raising ballot initiatives. The Portland Central City Task Force's Tax Advisory Group's report identified needed changes that remain unimplemented. High-earning households and business leaders have options, and Portland has become unattractive, making its public revenue base more fragile and undermining the state's prosperity.

Shared Vision

Oregon creates a stable, competitive, predictable tax system that funds important public services, attracts investments, retains talent, and supports business growth and the state's long-term prosperity. The state fixes its structural inefficiencies, improves alignment between state and local tax policy, and builds a broader, more resilient revenue base. These reforms rebuild public trust through greater transparency, accountability, simplicity, and confidence that tax revenues are being used effectively to deliver measurable outcomes for Oregonians.

Priority Recommendations

The most important step the Governor and Legislators can take to address Oregon's uneven tax structure is to support moving Oregon beyond its current "one-and-a-half-legged stool" model, which relies heavily on personal income tax and constrained property tax revenues. **Reform should aim to strengthen long-term revenue stability, diversify the tax base, reduce volatility, and increase contributions from nonresidents**. Achieving a more balanced and competitive tax system may require broader-based revenue tools that can be more regressive in isolation. But when paired with targeted investments in education, housing, healthcare, early childhood programs, and other essential services, they can support more equitable long-term outcomes for Oregonians. Over time, revenue growth and the elimination of ineffective programs and tax expenditures can help fund these investments while improving Oregon's competitiveness for business, talent, and investment.

2027 Legislative Session: Strengthen Oregon's Economic Competitiveness

While the Council agrees that more comprehensive reforms are ultimately needed, the following recommendations move the state closer to a balanced tax system in the near term, help businesses of all sizes innovate and employ more people, and make Oregon a more competitive place to do business. At this critical time when

Oregon must both respond to immediate economic pressures and prepare for its future, these policies support businesses and workers together to build a stronger and more resilient statewide economy. The Governor should also reject proposals that increase personal or business taxes and fees unless there is meaningful support from Oregon's employers of all sizes.

Modernize economic incentives, including the Research & Development tax credit to better support innovation and help smaller businesses working to grow, add employees, and stay in Oregon. Oregon's incentive structure often favors capital-intensive investments while providing more limited support for research development, talent, and operating expenditures that drive innovation and long-term competitiveness. Oregon should continue to support and expand programs that incentivize beyond capital expenditures, as well as modernizing the Research & Development tax credit to apply to more industries and include companies that pay above median county wages. To encourage innovation and strengthen connections between industry and higher education, Oregon could offer a 15% tax credit for company-led research and development and a 20% credit for projects conducted with Oregon universities.

Update the Estate Tax to support family businesses, so they can transition successfully from one generation to the next. Oregon should introduce targeted deductions for small businesses, following a best practice from Minnesota, and explore raising the threshold of the exemption to $3-5 million to achieve competitiveness with West Coast states. Minnesota defines a small business as having sales of less than $10 million annually and allows for a $2 million deduction, in addition to the exemption limit.

Reform the Corporate Activity Tax (CAT) so that small and medium-sized businesses, particularly those operating on thin margins, do not face extraordinary administrative burdens and costs. The current structure increases costs at every stage of production and sales, while the standard deduction disproportionately disadvantages smaller businesses with higher input costs. Oregon should consider increasing the filing and taxability threshold from $1 million to $2 million to reduce burdens on small business, while also moving to a subtractive method that allows a complete deduction of input costs while preserving the administrative structure. Any reforms should maintain revenue neutrality and ensure continued funding for essential public services, including K-12 education.

Reconnect the Qualified Small Business Stock (QSBS) policies to the federal tax code because they are critical to helping Oregon retain and grow emerging small businesses at a time when founders, investors, and growing companies are increasingly being recruited to other states. Keeping support for long-term investment in Oregon businesses can prevent the loss of jobs, capital, and future business growth to more business-friendly states.

Develop a Holistic Proposal to Be Implemented by 2029

Council members agree that our existing tax structure, with its over-reliance on income taxes and limitations on property taxes, is a barrier to needed investments in the education, healthcare, infrastructure, and climate resilience programs that our communities deserve. The Council recommends that the **Governor convene a nonpartisan tax reform working group** to develop a long-term reform proposal that can be implemented by 2029 in advance of the expiration of federal State and Local Tax (SALT) provisions. The group should be chartered to develop principles for reform, evaluate trade-offs in reform scenarios, develop recommendations for specific tax changes, and develop a pathway for implementing those changes though the Legislature and voters.

This group should be chartered to create a more balanced tax system that reduces the state's over-reliance on income taxes to fund essential public services. Topics the group should consider include:

- **Reforming the Corporate Activity Tax** as part of a comprehensive rebalancing.
- **Enabling local governments to increase funding stability** with common sense property tax regulations that sufficiently fund core programs without needing a complex array of local voter-approved funding sources.
- **Rebalancing personal income tax structure** to maintain progressivity and reduce effective rates for all income brackets.
- Supporting ongoing progressivity in the system through **reforms that support low- and middle-income households**.

BEST PRACTICES

Indiana's approach to comprehensive property tax reform offers useful lessons in how to develop durable, system-wide change through bundled reforms and stakeholder alignment. In 2008, the state enacted a bipartisan legislative package that paired property tax caps with shifts in state and local responsibilities, later reinforced through a 2010 constitutional amendment.

Dissenting perspective: Nearly all Council members agreed with this section, however two members disagreed with the need for many of the proposed tax changes and expressed concerns about the necessity of broader business incentives and their long-term impacts to the state. They agree that Oregon must strengthen its long-term competitiveness, but believe increasing investments in workforce and existing programs is more critical than increasing investments in business tax expenditures. Additionally, while further fiscal analysis would occur before implementation, these two Council members believe that the impacts of individual recommendations or their combined effects should be better understood before recommendations advance.

CHAPTER THREE

Permitting & Regulations

FOCUS: Business Climate

FOCUS
Business Climate

Permitting & Regulations

Background and Problem Statement

Regulatory and permitting processes play a central role in Oregon's business environment by shaping the speed and predictability of project development. For businesses, these processes directly influence decisions about where to invest, expand, and locate. Businesses must often navigate multiple state and local requirements related to land use, environmental standards, and construction, which can add cost, time, and uncertainty.

Oregon's 2026 legislative session took meaningful steps toward a more competitive business environment. Passage of HB 4084 demonstrates the commitment toward permitting modernization and improved interagency coordination. The proposed recommendations build on this important foundation for permitting reform, including the Joint Permitting Council, fast-track pathways for major investments, and agency-level permit catalog requirements.

Summary of Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholders consistently identified permitting complexity and unpredictability as major barriers to business growth and investment, particularly for small and medium-sized businesses without dedicated permitting or legal staff. Respondents described Oregon's regulatory system as fragmented, lengthy, inconsistent, and costly. They called for streamlined processes, stronger interagency coordination, greater transparency, and reduced burdens, while retaining essential protections. Many also perceive key regulatory agencies as inclined to deny applications or change standards mid-process, leading to distrust of the state's processes and making investments in Oregon seem riskier. Stakeholders noted insufficient guidance for applicants and emphasized the need for a cultural shift toward collaboration and problem-solving.

Shared Vision

Oregon delivers a permitting and regulatory system that is efficient, transparent, coordinated, and predictable, enabling timely project delivery and reducing administrative burden. To strengthen competitiveness with peer West Coast states, Oregon pairs strong environmental and community protections with responsive, solutions-oriented processes that move from "no" to "how." Because businesses experience Oregon's regulatory environment as a single interconnected system, the state sets a standard for predictability, accountability, coordination, and customer responsiveness that helps drive greater consistency statewide.

Priority Recommendations

Oregon can strengthen its regulatory environment by reducing the overall regulatory burden on businesses and adopting a market-based climate policy aligned with neighboring states.

- **Establish enforceable statewide permitting timelines and guardrails (a "shot clock")** by requiring agencies to approve or deny complete permit applications within clear statutory timelines, while maintaining environmental standards and protecting public health, safety, and welfare. The process should prevent projects from being delayed indefinitely and should include accountability measures such as public reporting and partial fee refunds when deadlines are missed. These deadlines should extend universally to all economic development permits, and not only those meeting HB 4084's capital investment thresholds, which would ensure predictable timelines become the standard across Oregon's permitting system rather than the exception.

- **Reduce regulatory and administrative burdens by 20%** by 2029, by removing outdated and duplicative regulations, which should improve government efficiency and reduce spending. Frontline employees should play a role in identifying regulations, processes, and reporting requirements that create inefficiencies or no longer serve their intended purpose, while decisions regarding regulatory changes should remain subject to leadership review. Agencies should leverage permit and streamlining analyses required under HB 4084, which directed key agencies to identify unnecessary steps, barriers, and obsolete processes, as a primary input for meeting this reduction target.

  The state should also establish a regulatory structure to ensure reforms support economic growth while maintaining protections for public health, essential services, and the environment. Consistent with the multi-agency coordination structure established by HB 4084's Joint Permitting Council, examples include coordinating environmental permitting across state agencies so applicants do not need to submit duplicative information for air quality, water quality, wetlands, and land use reviews; implementing consolidated or parallel agency review processes rather than sequential reviews; and/or eliminating duplicative reporting requirements across agencies.

- **Adopt a market-based Cap and Invest program** for greenhouse gas emissions. Upon implementation, the Governor should repeal the Climate Protection Program. Align Oregon's program with labor standards consistent with California and Washington's Cap and Invest approaches: auction revenues allocated for public works and infrastructure should require family sustaining wages, registered apprenticeship participation, and adherence to nondiscrimination and workforce inclusion standards.

BEST PRACTICES

Virginia's **Office of Regulatory Management** (ORM) was established in 2022 to bring consistency to regulatory procedures. ORM's objectives were to reduce regulatory requirements by 25%, improve efficiency in the regulatory and permitting approval process, and increase regulatory transparency through benefit-cost analysis. After three years, Virginia reduced 26% of regulatory requirements across the state.

PermitSF in San Francisco modernized its permits by consolidating permitting systems, utilized artificial intelligence to support application reviews, and created a more transparent and user-friendly process. The effort has reduced delays and helped business and development projects move more efficiently while maintaining regulatory standards.

Additional Recommendations

- The state should lead by example through permitting performance standards for state agencies and partner with local governments to advance shared best practices, including clear decision timelines, service level expectations, consistent application requirements, online permitting systems, and transparent standards for determining application completeness.
- Promote a pragmatic solutions-oriented regulatory culture across agencies including the state departments of Environmental Quality, Land Conservation and Development, State Lands, and Transportation, Oregon Health Authority,[2] and local jurisdictions. Expand coordinated rapid-review pathways for strategic projects and authorize the Governor's office to elevate and coordinate stalled projects across agencies and jurisdictions.
- The Governor should work with California and Washington to ensure alignment of key policies that affect business competitiveness, such as agricultural overtime standards including total compensation, and Oregon's Paid Family Leave Program.
- Because a stable electric utility system is a necessary component of a competitive economic environment, Oregon should advance solutions through the Oregon Public Utility Commission, in coordination with electric utilities, which should advance durable solutions addressing utility wildfire liability and long-term system resilience.
- The Governor should direct the DEQ to pause the Cleaner Air Oregon Toxic Air Contaminant Rule and Update rulemaking to allow for more rigorous scientific review. Direct DEQ program staff to focus on timely implementation of covered facilities, and processing of new permits.

2 The healthcare sector is one of Oregon's largest employers, and in many rural communities and regions, it represents the single largest employer. Oregon hospitals alone contribute $32.4 billion in economic activity and support 160,000 jobs statewide (Hospital Association of Oregon). However, the cost of healthcare is also a drag on the economy. Reducing the total cost of care and overall regulatory burden is critical to Oregon's prosperity.

Site Readiness & Infrastructure

FOCUS: Tools for Growth

FOCUS
Tools For Growth

Site Readiness & Infrastructure

Background and Problem Statement

Oregon's land use system is designed to manage growth, protect natural resources, and support efficient use of land and infrastructure. The state's economic growth and prosperity priorities are directly tied to the availability of development-ready land that can meet market and industry needs. Development-ready sites—as well as the expansion of existing facilities—also require public infrastructure. Unfortunately, Oregon faces a persistent shortage of development-ready land and infrastructure that limits the state's ability to retain and compete for business investment, which undermines the state's growth objectives.

Summary of Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholders consistently identified a lack of development-ready sites as a key constraint. Oregon does not have a sufficient supply of sites with the characteristics needed to compete for traded-sector opportunities, and many communities lack the infrastructure funding required to prepare sites for development. Businesses also cited the extraordinary costs associated with expanding existing facilities, including water, sewer, utility, and transportation system upgrades, that can significantly increase project costs and delay investment decisions.

Stakeholders report that Oregon's existing policies, programs, and tools need to be expanded, accelerated, and better coordinated and funded to increase competitiveness and reduce uncertainty across urban and rural communities.

When considering expansions of Urban Growth Boundaries, stakeholders note the definition of "available" and "suitable" land often diverge from market reality, so inventories are technically compliant but are functionally unusable. This disconnect creates uncertainty for businesses and limits the practical supply of land that can support near-term investment.

Shared Vision

Oregon modernizes its strong land use system to better position Oregon to capitalize on traded-sector opportunities while maintaining the values that have defined the state, shaped its growth and protected its farm and forest land for decades. The system's effectiveness is restored through targeted reforms, strategic alignment, and disciplined investment. The state strengthens its future competitiveness by developing the community infrastructure, financing tools, and sites necessary to attract and retain employers and support business expansion and job creation across the state.

Priority Recommendations

Oregon cannot compete for jobs or deliver enough housing without a reliable supply of development-ready land. Building on recent investments and policy direction established through HB 4084, the Governor and Legislature should **establish a significantly larger, dedicated, and recurring site readiness fund of $250 million per biennium**, using bonding authority in expectation of future tax revenues and economic impact. Deployed through the Industrial Site Loan Fund and the proposed Commerce Authority, investments should accelerate the delivery of development-ready employment sites aligned with the state's economic development strategy. Employers and their partners could access this capital for site development, remediation, and enabling infrastructure while benefiting from a clearer, fast-track path for priority projects to move through permitting.

The state should **modernize statutes and policies governing land designated for industrial and business development to better reflect site suitability and readiness,** including Goal 9 (Economic Development) standards for industrial lands. Updates should establish consistent criteria for evaluating site size, configuration, natural features, transportation access, infrastructure availability, power capacity, and location, ensuring more uniform interpretation across jurisdictions. Employment Buildable Lands Inventories should **incorporate objective, market-informed criteria** and realistic assumptions about development feasibility and timing.

The state must **ensure an adequate supply of development-ready sites aligned with the needs of target industry clusters.** When communities demonstrate a shortage of suitable industrial land, they should have a clearer and more predictable path to adjust urban growth boundaries. To support these objectives, the state should increase the aggregate inventory of development-ready industrial land by at least 2% and invest in the infrastructure needed to bring sites online. Priority should be given to communities with the largest deficits of suitable industrial land, where infrastructure investments can have the greatest impact on expanding site readiness and development capacity.

BEST PRACTICES

Pennsylvania Strategic Investments to Enhance Sites Program (PA SITES) is a $400 million state-led, large-scale investment program for site readiness. It provides grants and loans for site planning, infrastructure, and development to create shovel-ready sites aligned with the state's target industries.

Additional Recommendations

- **Conduct a comprehensive review of Oregon's infrastructure financing portfolio** and identify gaps, barriers, and opportunities to better support economic development and community infrastructure needs. Based on this analysis, direct state agencies to recommend new financing tools and structural reforms that improve access to funding and accelerate project delivery. The Legislature should then provide sustained funding for the Special Public Works Fund and similar infrastructure-enabling programs.
- **Ensure sites receiving proposed site readiness funding enroll in the Certified Shovel Ready Program** and simultaneously enhance customer concierge support for enrolled local jurisdictions and developers.
- **Provide clear state guidance and authority to ensure every region of Oregon increases its supply of development-ready sites**, with region-specific targets of three to six priority development sites to remain competitive for traded-sector opportunities. Ensure sites align with the needs of target industries identified in state and regional economic strategies.

Talent Development

FOCUS: Workforce

FOCUS
Workforce

Talent Development

Background and Problem Statement

Oregon's workforce system—spanning K-12, community colleges, universities, workforce boards, apprenticeship programs, and community-based organizations—plays a central role in preparing workers and supporting employer talent needs across urban and rural communities. The system helps determine whether businesses can find, train, and retain the workforce needed to grow and compete. However, the system is fragmented, difficult to navigate, and less aligned than comparable models in peer states. Limited coordination with employers and low transferability between institutions contribute to inconsistent outcomes.

Underinvestment in higher education is also a challenge. Oregon ranks 37th nationally in higher education appropriations per full-time student and invests 24% less per student than the national average, contributing to some of the **highest tuition costs in the West**. Oregon's public four-year institutions have the highest average tuition and fees in the West, while community colleges rank second highest, increasing reliance on tuition revenue creates barriers for students and limits the state's ability to develop the talent pipeline needed for long-term economic competitiveness.

OREGON'S HIGHER EDUCATION, per student

RANKED
37th
NATIONALLY IN APPROPRIATIONS

INVESTS
24% LESS
PER STUDENT THAN THE NATIONAL AVERAGE

Summary of Stakeholder Feedback

Stakeholders emphasized that misalignment between education, training, and industry needs—combined with a decentralized system and barriers such as childcare and housing—limits employers' ability to hire and scale their workforce. They strongly supported streamlining and better integrating education and workforce systems to reduce fragmentation and respond to employer needs. Most feedback on K-12 focused on adequate system funding with deteriorating outcomes. Stakeholders also voiced broad support for expanding sector-based talent pipelines, though sustained funding remains a challenge. Many stakeholders also noted the need for greater investment in Oregon's public universities to reduce reliance on tuition revenue, make higher education more affordable and develop the talent needed for a competitive economy. Many cited the semiconductor workforce model as an example of effective coordination among industry, higher education, and training providers.

Shared Vision

Oregon's talent development system is coordinated, accessible, and aligned with the state's economic opportunities. Clear pathways connect Oregonians with the education and training they need to access good paying, in demand careers, supported by strong partnerships across K–12, Career and Technical Education (CTE), community colleges, and universities. The system is responsive to the needs of small, medium-sized, and large employer demand and designed to deliver a reliable pipeline of skilled workers for key industries. Reduced participation barriers and shared accountability measures ensure the system delivers meaningful results for both workers and employers.

Priority Recommendations

The Governor should establish a **Cabinet of Economic & Talent Development** with the authority to align state agencies around measurable economic, education, and workforce outcomes. The Cabinet should be composed of leaders from relevant state agencies and charged with accelerating coordination across agencies, breaking down silos, and driving accountable, results-oriented strategies tied to Oregon's long-term competitiveness. The Cabinet should lead and implement a statewide **Talent Alignment Strategy** to align Oregon's K-12, community college, university, and workforce development systems across rural and urban communities around measurable economic and workforce outcomes, while looking for opportunities to streamline and consolidate boards and councils. The strategy should build from the recently released **Oregon Talent Assessment** and must establish ambitious statewide goals tied directly to Oregon's long-term competitiveness, including making Oregon a top 10 state in math and reading proficiency and significantly expanding STEM, AI and related retraining and upskilling, career-connected learning, CTE, apprenticeships, bridge programs, dual credits, and industry partnerships. The Cabinet should propose legislation that would require adoption of proven best practices and explore policy levers, including preemption where necessary, to ensure consistent statewide implementation and accountability. Oregon should build on emerging sector-based workforce consortia and better align education and training with industry demand. Oregon's education and workforce systems must operate as a coordinated talent pipeline that prepares students for high-demand industries, attracts employers and families, and creates long-term pathways to family-wage careers in Oregon.

RECOMMENDED STATE GOALS

TOP 10

RANK TOP 10 MATH & READING

EXPAND STEM & AI PROGRAMS

EXPAND CAREER-CONNECTED LEARNING

CTE
APPRENTICESHIPS
BRIDGE PROGRAMS
DUAL CREDITS
INDUSTRY PARTNERSHIPS

Strategically align higher education funding to match West Coast states and support Oregon's long-term economic competitiveness. Oregon's universities and community colleges are critical drivers of workforce development, research, innovation, and business growth. The state should modernize higher education funding structures to better support industry partnerships, applied research, technology commercialization, and enrollment growth in high-demand fields such as artificial intelligence, biotechnology, semiconductors, advanced manufacturing, and clean energy. The Legislature should also commit to ongoing funding of the University Innovation Research Fund (UIRF) at $20 million per biennium to leverage matching federal research and innovation investments and strengthen Oregon's position in nationally competitive industries.

BEST PRACTICES

The **National Talent Strategy**, published by the Bipartisan Policy Center, calls for a coordinated, data-driven approach that aligns education, workforce, and industry systems to better connect people to jobs and meet evolving economic needs. Oregon can lead by implementing this model at the state level, aligning agencies and funding, building an integrated system to track outcomes, and adapting programs to meet industry demand.

The **Florida 2030 Blueprint** demonstrates how states can align education and workforce strategies with economic development goals by identifying high-demand occupations, establishing measurable talent targets, and connecting K-12, postsecondary, and workforce systems to the skills employers need most.

Additional Recommendations

- Direct the Legislature to engage with the Oregon Workforce and Talent Development Board (WTDB) and local workforce boards to **prioritize funding for scalable, high-performing workforce programs** with measurable employment and wage outcomes aligned with industry demand. The Legislature should consolidate fragmented one-off programs and workforce board structures and invest in proven models that strengthen Oregon's long-term talent pipeline and economic competitiveness.
- The Governor and the Legislature should direct the Department of Education, Higher Education Coordinating Commission, and the Oregon Employment Department to **build a statewide, outcomes-based, talent intelligence system** as the core technology platform supporting Oregon's Talent Alignment Strategy. By integrating education, training, and employment data, the system would provide policymakers, educators, and employers with real-time insight into talent pipeline performance, shortages, as well as outcomes to inform funding and program design decisions. This system should be supported by regular external review to ensure transparency and effectiveness.
- **Treat talent development as a core economic competitiveness strategy** by charging the proposed Commerce Authority and Cabinet of Talent and Economic Development to align sector strategies, education investments, and workforce funding with employer demand around Oregon's highest-growth industries across urban and rural communities.
- Ensure HECC's upcoming comprehensive study of Oregon's postsecondary system **includes private sector input** and is focused on aligning community college programs toward workforce training and AI skills.
- The Governor should engage with the Oregon Employment Department and HECC, in consultation with organized labor, to **enhance access and reskilling for Oregon's workforce** by improving transferability between community colleges and universities, expanding employer partnerships through customized training, and promoting lifelong learning through flexible, stackable credential programs.

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OREGON PROSPERITY COUNCIL

APPENDIX A

Prosperity Council
Engagement Report

Appendix A. Prosperity Council Engagement Report

Overview and Purpose

The Oregon Prosperity Council was created as part of Oregon's Prosperity Roadmap, initiated by Governor Tina Kotek. The Prosperity Council was charged with developing recommendations to execute and develop the strategy's three main goals: retain and grow Oregon businesses, catalyze job creation, and accelerate Oregon's economic growth.[1] The Prosperity Council wanted to ground its recommendations in stakeholder input, in addition to research and analysis.

These engagement efforts were designed to gather perspectives from a broad range of stakeholders and community members across Oregon and to inform discussions about the state's economic future. Together, they provided opportunities for participants to share their experiences, priorities, and ideas for strengthening Oregon's long-term prosperity.

This appendix summarizes the statewide survey, listening session findings, and inbound letters, including who participated and how engagement was conducted. Findings are organized around five key topic areas: economic development tools, Oregon's tax structure, permitting and regulations, land use and site readiness, and talent development.

Engagement Overview

To support broad statewide participation from a wide range of stakeholders and residents, the Prosperity Council's engagement process used a mixed-methods feedback collection strategy. The project team for the engagement process included staff from ECOnorthwest and Gard Communications, as well as designated staff supporting the Council's co-chairs. Open-ended, structured input was collected through a public survey, while more free-form qualitative input was gathered through facilitated listening sessions, letters, and memoranda that were submitted proactively to Council members and staff. This approach allowed the project team to identify recurring themes across a large volume of feedback while preserving more detailed stakeholder perspectives.

[1] https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policies/pages/prosperity-council.aspx

Exhibit 1 below summarizes the three forms of engagement: what the engagement was, who could and did participate, how the engagement was conducted and shared with the public, as well as the period of time that the public had the opportunity to engage in the process.

Exhibit 1. Summary of Engagement Efforts

Engagement Summary
Public Survey
Lead: ECOnorthwest designed and administered a public opt-in survey in partnership with the Prosperity Council Co-Chairs' staff. **Audience:** Businesses, coalitions, community-based organizations, public sector partners, and individuals were invited to participate. As shown in Exhibit XX, respondents represented all Oregon counties except Grant County, with participation from every region of the state. The survey received 2,833 responses, of which 1,039 included written feedback and were included in the analysis. The remaining 1,794 responses did not include written feedback and were excluded from the analysis. **Method:** The survey was distributed directly to stakeholders, as well as posted on the Prosperity Council website. Participants provided background information about themselves and their organizations, including organizational type, industry sector, and organization size. Survey questions solicited feedback on challenges, opportunities, solutions, implementation actors, existing programs, and visions of success across the Business Climate, Tools for Growth, and Workforce topic areas (see Exhibit XX). **Timeline/Timeframe:** The survey was open from February 6 through March 25, 2026.
Listening Sessions
Lead: ECOnorthwest developed a listening session toolkit, including a facilitator guide and report-out form, in partnership with the Prosperity Council Co-Chairs' staff. **Audience:** Listening sessions were facilitated by interested stakeholders, Council members, the Chief Prosperity Officer, Regional Solutions staff, and other community facilitators. More than 60 listening sessions were held in over 25 locations across all eleven of Oregon's economic development regions, including rural, coastal, agricultural, and urban communities. Participants represented a broad cross-section of Oregon's civic, economic, and community landscape, including government agencies, tribal governments, higher education institutions, workforce and labor organizations, economic development partners, tourism representatives, business associations, nonprofits, and private-sector employers across multiple industries. **Method:** The project team developed and distributed a listening session toolkit to support facilitated discussions about Oregon's economic challenges and potential solutions. The toolkit was shared directly with stakeholders and posted on the Prosperity Council website. Facilitators submitted session

summaries through an online form or by email. The project team reviewed submissions and categorized individual policy options by topic area and key theme to identify recurring trends, areas of alignment, and priority issues.

Timeline/Timeframe: Listening sessions were conducted between February 2 and May 22, 2026.

Letters and Memos

Lead: ECOnorthwest collected and analyzed letters, memoranda, and other written submissions provided by interested stakeholders.

Audience: Stakeholders submitted more than 45 letters and memoranda representing a broad range of perspectives, including major employers, statewide business associations, public agencies, universities, venture capital organizations, environmental and transportation advocacy groups, government affairs representatives, and individual residents. Submissions reflected perspectives from established and emerging industries, including software, technology, biotechnology, clean energy, advanced manufacturing, consumer products, agriculture, food production, utilities, public safety, and small businesses.

Method: In addition to the structured engagement activities, the Prosperity Council website provided an email address for public submissions, and stakeholders also shared feedback directly with individual Council members. ECOnorthwest incorporated all received emails, letters, and memoranda into the overall analysis. The project team reviewed written submissions and categorized individual suggestions by topic area and key theme to identify recurring trends, areas of alignment, and priority issues across the feedback.

Timeline/Timeframe: Written submissions were received between February 2 and May 22, 2026.

Technical Approach: Engagement Design and Analysis

Public Survey

The public survey was structured around three broad focus areas related to Oregon's economic competitiveness. Within each focus area, respondents were asked a common set of open-ended questions designed to identify challenges, opportunities, existing resources, and potential solutions. Focus areas and definitions:

- **Business Climate:** Oregon's business climate reflects the extent to which the state provides a predictable and competitive environment for employers through practical policies on regulation, permitting, and taxation, while maintaining long-term revenue stability to support public services and economic growth.
- **Workforce:** Oregon's workforce environment reflects how well the state's education, training, and talent development systems align Oregonians' skills with the needs of employers, particularly in

growing sectors, and how effectively those systems adapt over time to support economic opportunity and a competitive labor market.

- **Tools for growth:** Oregon's economic development toolkit reflects the set of policies, programs, and investments (such as site readiness, land use and permitting processes, incentives, infrastructure, and local initiatives) that shape the state's ability to attract new businesses and support the growth and expansion of existing employers.

To better understand the perspectives represented in the responses, participants were asked a series of background questions, including whether they were responding on behalf of a public or private organization, their industry sector, and the size of their business or organization. Following these questions, participants were invited to provide written feedback across any of the survey focus areas relevant to their experience. **Exhibit 2** summarizes the questions included in the survey provided for each focus area.

Exhibit 2. Open-ended Survey Questions

Q1.	What challenge would you like addressed in the Prosperity Council's recommendations? What is the biggest barrier or friction point in this area?
Q2.	What solution or specific change would you make?
Q3.	Who has to act for this to happen? (i.e. the Legislature, local governments, employers, education/training partners, etc.)
Q4.	What existing state programs and policies does Oregon have that are most helpful to you that you want to see continue?
Q5.	What promising models or effective best practices have you seen in other states that you'd like Oregon to emulate?

The project team analyzed survey responses using Atlas.ti, a qualitative analysis software that supported the systematic coding of individual responses. The team applied a deductive coding framework based on the study's primary topic areas, including economic development tools, Oregon's tax structure, permitting and regulations, land use and site readiness, and talent development. These high-level categories served as the primary analytical structure for organizing responses.

Within each category, the team applied subcodes to capture the nature and context of stakeholder feedback. Subcodes identified themes such as support for existing programs, recommendations for new or revised policies, development constraints, workforce challenges, perceived barriers to business growth, and stakeholder sentiment. When responses addressed multiple topics, the team applied multiple codes to reflect the full scope of the feedback.

The team also used targeted keyword searches for policies and programs identified through prior engagement efforts and project memoranda. The team reviewed each reference in context and assigned codes based on the substance of the feedback rather than the policy or program itself. For example, a response referencing the Corporate Activity Tax may have been coded under the broader theme of Business Climate while also receiving a subcode related to Oregon's tax structure.

Finally, the team analyzed the distribution of responses across categories and subcodes to identify recurring themes, patterns, and areas of stakeholder consensus. The findings presented in this appendix reflect the results of that analysis.

Listening Sessions

The listening session facilitator guide served as one mechanism for collecting stakeholder feedback from across the state and was publicly available on the Prosperity Council's website. Like the survey, the guide was organized around three topic areas: Business Climate, Workforce, and Tools for Growth. It provided a standardized framework for convening and facilitating listening sessions, including facilitator responsibilities, key definitions, an overview of economic development, and a sample agenda. The sample agenda prompted discussion using questions aligned with the open-ended survey questions, as shown in **Exhibit 3**.

Exhibit 3. Listening Session Facilitation Discussion Questions

Q1.	What challenge would you like addressed in the Prosperity Council's recommendations? What is the biggest barrier or friction point in this area?
Q2.	What solution or specific change would you recommend addressing this challenge?
Q3.	What would success look like in 2–3 years?
Q4.	Who has to act for this to happen? (i.e., the Legislature, local governments, employers, education/training partners, etc.)
Q5.	Which existing state programs and policies does Oregon have that you want to see continue? What programs or policies have been most useful for you?
Q6.	What promising models or effective best practices have you seen in other states that you'd like Oregon to emulate?

The guide also directed facilitators to submit findings through a Google form, creating a consistent format for collecting and analyzing feedback across sessions. To make participation more accessible, report-outs were also accepted by email.

Report-outs from the listening sessions were reviewed to identify suggestions, challenges, and recurring themes raised by participants. Each item was categorized using two complementary classification groups. The primary classification organizes input by five subject areas:

1. Reshaping Oregon's role in economic development tools, incentives, and authority;
2. Examining and taking steps to reform Oregon's tax structure;
3. Incentivizing a faster and more competitive permitting and regulatory environment;
4. Increasing the supply of development-ready land; and
5. Creating a more integrated workforce system while driving job growth in growing sectors.

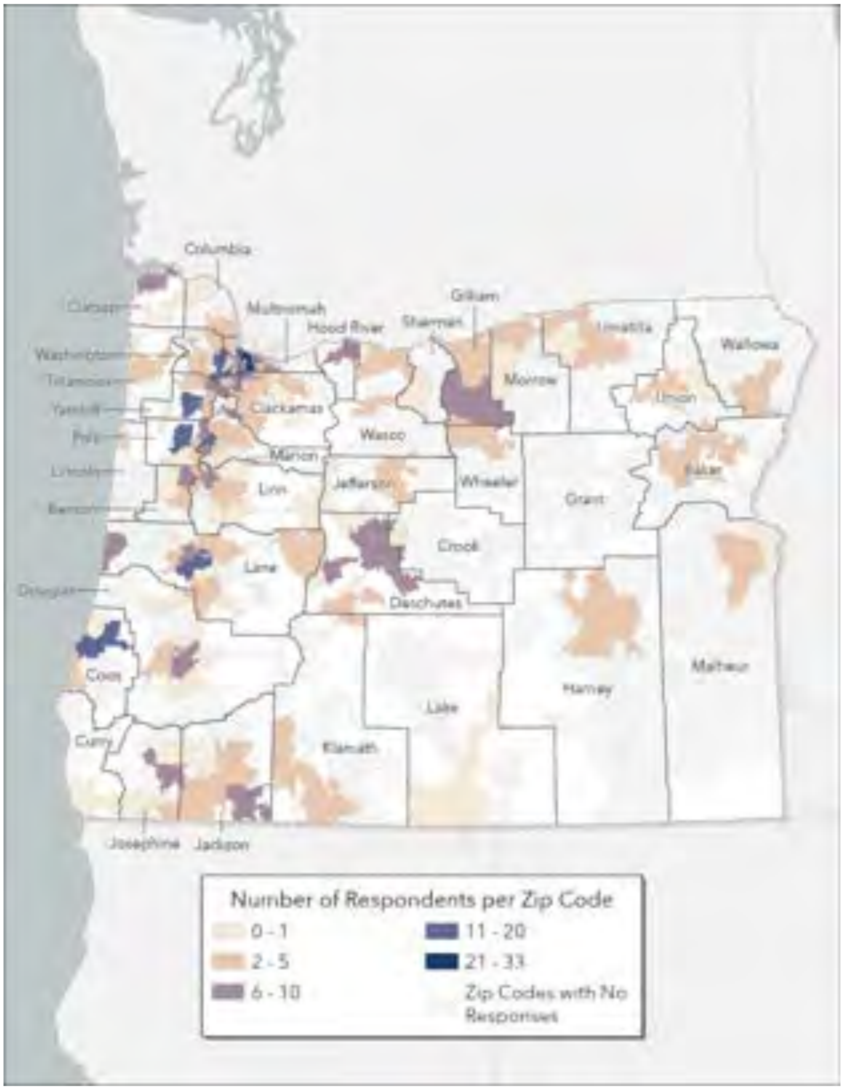
Ideas that did not align with one of these five subject areas were categorized as “Other.” A second classification was added to align suggestions with the Council’s three focus areas: Business Climate, Workforce, and Tools for Growth. Because some ideas are related to more than one focus area, secondary focus areas were also noted where applicable. Within the five subject areas, two additional levels of sub-categories were developed to further distinguish patterns in the ideas and challenges raised through the listening sessions.

After categorizing all suggestions, the project team reviewed each subject area to identify recurring themes and patterns. Suggestions raised by multiple sources were identified as broadly supported themes, while recurring suggestions with less frequent support were identified as additional perspectives. The team also identified competing perspectives when suggestions from multiple sources differed from or were in tension with a broadly supported theme.

Geographic Distribution: Survey Responses

As shown in **Exhibit 4**, survey respondents represented all Oregon counties except Grant County. Responses were distributed across the entire state, with participation from every region, indicating a broad geographic reach. However, response rates varied across Oregon, with some regions seeing substantially higher participation than others. As a result, the perspectives captured through the survey may not fully reflect the views and experiences of all residents across the state's geographic catchment area.

Exhibit 4. Geographic Distribution of Survey Respondents



Limitations

The findings presented in this report should be interpreted within the context of several limitations associated with the public engagement process. The public engagement process was conducted within a relatively compressed project timeline. The survey was available for a limited period, which may have reduced opportunities for participation among individuals who became aware of it after it closed or were unable to participate during the engagement window. Consequently, some community members who wished to provide input may not have had an opportunity to do so. Listening sessions and other free-form feedback avenues experienced similar deadlines that may have hampered participation.

The forms of engagement discussed here were available primarily through online channels and outreach networks. While these methods helped broaden statewide participation, they may have created barriers for individuals with limited access to internet-connected devices or other means of gaining access to these opportunities. As a result, certain populations may be underrepresented in the survey findings.

These limitations are common in voluntary public engagement efforts and suggest that the findings should be viewed as informative of community perspectives rather than fully representative of all Oregon residents. The engagement process was designed to gather input from a broad cross-section of stakeholders; however, it does not constitute a comprehensive or statistically representative assessment of public opinion across the entire state.

Key findings presented were developed using a combination of deductive and inductive coding approaches. Deductive coding allowed the analysis team to organize responses around predefined topics and project objectives, while inductive coding enabled the identification of themes that emerged directly from participant feedback. Although this approach provides a structured yet flexible framework for analysis, qualitative coding inherently involves the researcher's interpretation. As a result, themes reflect the most prevalent patterns observed in the data but may not capture all nuances or perspectives expressed by participants.

Key Findings across Engagements

1. Reshape Oregon's role in economic development tools, incentives, and authority

Oregonians seek to reform current economic development tools and incentives. They note that existing structures don’t always work well for rural areas and contribute to uneven business growth and success. Alongside this, feedback centered around the need to develop coordinated strategies throughout state agencies and systems to incentivize investment, convey business-friendly practices, and assist businesses that are already in the state.

» **Broadly supported themes** reflect the most frequent responses, typically representing a majority or near-majority.

» **Additional perspectives** reflect recurring but less dominant perspectives.

» **Competing perspectives** reflect differing or opposing viewpoints on a given issue, highlighting areas of divergence in respondents’ input.

Broadly supported themes:

- **Transform Business Oregon:** Multiple sources suggest that Oregon could benefit from a more proactive and coordinated economic development model and encourage structural reforms informed by peer states (Arizona Commerce Authority cited repeatedly). Specific suggestions include an independent organizational review, a coordinated business recruitment plan with key performance indicators, and restoring the agency to its statutory focus on business development rather than functioning primarily as an infrastructure finance authority. Several sources also call for

better coordination with regional Economic Development Organizations, Destination Marking Organizations, and universities as delivery partners.
    - When asked who needs to act in order to see change, survey respondents noted that the Oregon Legislature should coordinate with existing programs, such as Business Oregon, to better deliver grants, technical assistance, or other resources to businesses.
- **Oregon needs competitive incentives:** Stakeholders from both urban and rural areas described Oregon as "not in the game" with respect to incentives compared with competitor states. Proposed solutions included a Jobs Growth Tax Credit, expanded Enterprise Zone programs, and a right-sized Strategic Investment Program threshold. Rural stakeholders said programs such as Opportunity Zones and New Markets Tax Credits have not effectively reached rural communities and need simpler access and better technical assistance. Portland metro stakeholders also called for aggressive incentive zones in the central city to address office vacancies and business losses to Clark County.
- **Signal that Oregon is open for business:** Stakeholders call for clearer, more genuine messaging from state leadership that signals Oregon is open for business.

Additional perspectives:

- Focus on small and existing businesses. Multiple listening sessions, including those in Eastern Oregon, Mid-Valley, Portland Metro, South Coast, and food and agriculture stakeholders, emphasized that economic development should not focus solely on attracting large employers. Sources suggest that retaining and supporting the organic growth of small and medium-sized businesses may drive more sustained economic gains than business relocation alone, and that incentives should be accessible to smaller firms.

    As one respondent stated, "Small, Oregon-based business need to be supported and encouraged. Small business creates jobs, builds local wealth, and is responsive to local communities. Yet, state and local policies that rely heavily on tax expenditures/abatements largely benefit very large and out-of-state businesses."

- **Recognize traded-sector industries as core economic drivers.** Multiple submissions suggest that Oregon's tax, permitting, workforce, and land use policies should be better aligned to support traded-sector industries. Although stakeholders identified different priority industries, they consistently note that traded sectors play an important role in driving economic growth and that policy changes should help address constraints affecting their competitiveness and expansion.

Competing perspectives:

- **Incentive philosophy.** Some sources cautioned that incentives often go to companies that would have located in the state regardless, and that those resources could be put to better use. Conservation and food systems stakeholders called for reforms that account for environmental, infrastructure, and community impacts, arguing that current incentives do not capture the full costs of uses such as data centers. Some sources also suggested that public dollars provided to private companies should be tied to enforceable conditions related to workforce, environmental, and community outcomes.

2. Examine and take steps to Reform Oregon's tax structure

Many stakeholders identified Oregon's tax burden, including state and local taxes, as a top concern. The cumulative weight of state and local taxes was described as unsustainable for business and a disincentive to locating in Oregon. Responses referenced existing tax structures as duplicative and often rooted in outdated systems originally designed without keeping in mind rising yearly inflation, as well as the 'slim margins' of Oregon-based small or mid-sized businesses.

Broadly supported themes:

- **Corporate Activity Tax (CAT) reform:** Suggested changes range from near-term administrative fixes (directing the Department of Revenue to address rule interpretations) to mid-term legislative approaches (assigning rates by NAICS codes and raising thresholds) to long-term structural replacement (moving to a Business Activity Tax or true Value-Added Tax). Multiple sources argue the CAT should be redone rather than tweaked, citing sector-specific examples of how tax liability can compound at multiple points in a supply chain, increasing costs for producers and industries.

  Some respondents noted the disproportionate impact the CAT tax has on small business owners, as one respondent stated:

  "The biggest barrier small business owners face in Oregon today is the Oregon Corporate Activity Tax (CAT). While its intent may have been to broaden the tax base, the CAT has become a significant drag on growth for Main Street businesses that operate with slim margins."

- **Comprehensive tax reform is overdue:** Several sources call for a bipartisan tax reform task force. Several propose considering a broad-based sales tax at a low rate, paired with offsetting reductions in income and corporate taxes. Sources acknowledge this is politically difficult but describe it as necessary for long-term competitiveness and revenue stability.

  Respondents look forward to coordinated efforts for tax reform and emphasize the overdue need, one survey respondent emphasized:

  "Build a tax reform or tax modernization coalition made up of electeds, business groups, labor, and local governments that are committed to co-designing a tax system for the 22nd [sic] century."

Additional perspectives:

- **Reforming tax structure for small to mid-sized businesses.** Multiple sources suggested reviewing tax thresholds to reduce the tax burden on small to medium-sized businesses, including suggestions to tie thresholds to inflation and offering tax forbearance plans to small businesses.

  Survey respondents envisioned success in 2-3 years that looked like less burdens on small businesses:

  "Success in 2–3 years would look measurable, not rhetorical. First, we would see net-positive small-business formation in Oregon, with more businesses opening than closing. The current outflow of employers relocating to lower-tax, lower-regulation states would reverse or, at a minimum, stabilize. Second, we would see meaningful reform of the

Corporate Activity Tax, reflected in lower effective tax burdens on small and mid-sized businesses."

- **Local tax preemption.** Some sources argue that without preemption of local income and payroll taxes, any state-level reforms will be replaced by new local levies. Sources from the Portland Metro area propose structured sunset reviews for new tax measures and higher signature thresholds for tax-raising ballot initiatives.
- **SB 1507 and Oregon's partial disconnect:** SB 1507 is cited as contributing to increased costs for small businesses through the removal of accelerated depreciation. Decoupling from federal Qualified Small Business Stock (QSBS) policy could discourage startup formation, reduce access to capital, and incentivize entrepreneurs and investors to locate in other states.
- **Reforming the estate tax.** Some sources identified Oregon's estate tax thresholds as a concern, particularly for capital retention, family business continuity, and farm and ranch succession. Recommendations included raising the threshold and creating more succession-friendly treatment for family farms and ranches.

Competing perspectives:

A small number of sources opposed several of the tax reform ideas raised elsewhere in the feedback. These sources cautioned against reducing Oregon's top marginal income tax rates, eliminating or substantially streamlining the Corporate Activity Tax, and exploring a sales tax. They emphasized that the CAT is dedicated to education funding and noted that Oregon voters have repeatedly rejected sales tax proposals. These sources also raised broader concerns about business tax breaks and incentives, calling for any tax expenditures to be tied to enforceable conditions related to wages, training, and community benefits.

3. Incentivize a faster and more competitive permitting and regulatory environment

Oregonians converged on the need for more streamlined, timely, and transparent permitting and regulatory processes. Respondents emphasized that they felt that the current system creates complicated and long permitting processes that contribute to a higher barrier to entry for businesses to start. Additionally, many respondents suggested fast-tracking permitting for target industries, better staffing at the local level agencies, and significantly greater coordination between state and local entities related to environmental and land-use regulations or restrictions.

Broadly supported themes:

- **Streamline permitting and increase transparency:** Specific mechanisms recommended include transparency dashboards, one-stop permitting offices, digital permitting systems, predictable maximum timelines, and fast-track pathways for strategic industries. Multiple sources cite wetland and floodplain permitting as particularly slow and costly.

  In response to the best-practices question, several survey respondents suggested models from other states. One respondent explained:

  "Several states have implemented practices that improve predictability and efficiency in their business climate: One-Stop Permitting Systems: Centralized platforms that allow businesses to navigate permitting requirements through a single, coordinated process.

Guaranteed or Target Permitting Timelines: Clear expectations for review and approval timelines, increasing certainty for investors."

    - Stakeholder feedback also suggested that permitting reform and fast-track approaches should apply to agricultural and food-processing projects, not only to large industrial or urban developments.
- **Regulatory reform to reduce the number of regulations and simplify/address cumulative regulatory burden:** Stakeholders described the cumulative burden of overlapping regulations as a problem across industries and particularly for small businesses. Suggested solutions include a "2 removed for 1 regulation added" or similar regulatory reform model, accelerating the rulemaking review cycle from every 5 years to every 1-2 years, requiring real economic impact statements through the State Economists' office, and systematic sunsetting of outdated rules. Once, a source described the dynamic as "pancaking": new rules layered on top of existing requirements without consideration of cumulative cost.
- **Improve interagency coordination, particularly for environmental and land-use permitting:** Stakeholders described a fragmented and sometimes contradictory system that forces businesses to navigate multiple agencies for a single project. Suggested fixes included parallel interagency review, restoring the Regional Solutions Department's original role in resolving regulatory bottlenecks, and programmatic connections to better align state, regional, and local efforts. Stakeholders from the Portland metro region added that overlapping city, county, and state permitting requirements create additional uncertainty for businesses and developers.

  Survey respondents suggested a dedicated body to assist in interagency coordination:

  "Several states have implemented practices that improve predictability and efficiency in their business climate: One-Stop Permitting Systems: Centralized platforms that allow businesses to navigate permitting requirements through a single, coordinated process."

Additional perspectives:

- **Reform the Climate Protection Program (CPP):** CPP was mentioned in several of the primary topic areas, with multiple business community sources and listening sessions citing the need for reform. Suggestions included pausing the program, completely overhauling the program, or replacing it with a Cap and Invest model.
    - Suggestions from survey respondents included creating a 'functional carbon marketplace', modeling a Carbon Tax on California's system, or even exempting some Emissions-Intensive, Trade Exposed (EITE) companies from the CPP.
- **Recycling Modernization Act (RMA) Reform:** Other sources suggested evaluating and modernizing the RMA, citing concerns about cost effectiveness, transparency, fairness, and potential disproportionate impacts on specific industries. Some sources also raised legal concerns related to implementation.
- **Agricultural overtime and seasonal labor regulations.** Another cluster of feedback described Oregon's agricultural overtime threshold, Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) heat rules, and evolving farmworker housing requirements as compounding cost pressures for seasonal agriculture, particularly given producers' limited pricing power. Proposals included freezing or modifying overtime thresholds, extending the agricultural overtime tax credit, reducing state-level barriers to H-2A and H-2B programs, stabilizing farmworker housing rules, and engaging agricultural employers, workers, and workforce stakeholders to evaluate implementation impacts.

Competing perspectives:

- Conservation stakeholders argue that regulations provide certainty and prevent harm, and that permitting processes that bypass public participation create legal vulnerability rather than efficiency. This is a distinct minority view in the feedback, but it represents an organized constituency.

4. Increase the supply of development ready land

In this area, the feedback focused on infrastructure investments to prepare land for development, reforms to land use laws, and the creation of a reliable, accessible inventory of development-ready sites.

Broadly supported themes:

- **Infrastructure investment is essential to increase the supply of development ready land:** Sources from every region call for accelerated infrastructure funding to local jurisdictions, revolving loan funds for site readiness, and long-term coordination between state and local partners. Water and wastewater capacity are identified as a binding constraint on business expansion in smaller communities. Energy infrastructure (generation, transmission capacity, and siting timelines) is increasingly cited as a constraint on industrial competitiveness.

  Survey respondents suggested that the lack of energy infrastructure impedes the attraction and retention of business, particularly in rural and low-income areas:

  "Rural and low-income communities are systematically underserved. Utility infrastructure underinvestment raises costs for manufacturers and small businesses, particularly as electrification of industrial processes accelerates."

- **Reform land-use laws:** Stakeholders across the state agreed that Oregon's land use system now constrains industrial site readiness and clean energy development, and that decades of incremental reform have left the state without a clear path forward. Proposed solutions included updating agricultural product definitions, reforming third-party Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) challenge rules, reevaluating Exclusive Farm Use designations on nonfarmable land, and streamlining Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) expansions. Rural and metro stakeholders alike described the system as regionally inconsistent and unpredictably slow.

  Survey respondents specifically noted that rural communities would benefit from land use reform that focused on flexibility in the designated use for land. Others noted that they felt that the current land-use system, especially in rural communities, is outdated for their type of development needs:

  "Oregon's land use system has protected farmland, natural resources, and livability—and that remains important. But parts of the system were built for a 1970s economy, not a 2026 economy competing for advanced manufacturing, clean tech, and traded-sector investment."

Competing perspectives:

- While the business community supported UGB expansion, Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) reclassification of nonfarmable land, and modernization of the 50-year-old land use system, agriculture, conservation, and some regional stakeholders argued the opposite. They called for halting UGB expansion, protecting Class I and II agricultural soils, prioritizing redevelopment of underused urban land, and addressing land speculation driven by repeated threats to EFU and UGB protections. Additionally, some stakeholders called for increased funding to conserve and protect the state's natural resources.

5. Create a more integrated workforce system and drive job growth in growing sectors

Feedback emphasized the need for stronger alignment between workforce development efforts and employer needs. Respondents highlighted opportunities to increase employer involvement in workforce planning, improve coordination among state agencies, educational institutions, and industry partners, and expand existing technical training pathways. Many also expressed support for better systems to track program outcomes and effectiveness. Commonly cited barriers to workforce participation and retention included childcare affordability and availability, as well as concerns related to Oregon's Paid Leave program.

Broadly supported themes:

- **Align workforce training programs with industry needs and across agencies:** Stakeholders repeatedly emphasized the need to update or create programs that better align research and workforce pipelines with the needs of priority sectors. The most common suggestion was expanding Career and Technical Education (CTE) from middle school through community college. Suggested priority sectors ranged from technology, artificial intelligence, and advanced manufacturing to agriculture and natural resources. Several cited models from other states, including Idaho's LAUNCH program, North Carolina's training reimbursement model, and Mississippi's K–12 turnaround efforts.
- **Increase coordination across workforce agencies and partners:** The lack of coordination among workforce agencies, employers, regional partners, and research partners was frequently cited as a challenge to cultivating and developing the workforce businesses need. Suggestions included consolidating Oregon's workforce systems, mandating interagency data-sharing agreements, improving the dissemination of information about existing training/workforce support programs, and streamlining access to workforce agencies.
    - When asked who needs to act to assist in talent development, survey respondents offered examples of a 'grow-your-own' model, suggesting that employers and education (K-12, Community colleges, and ESD's) work together to co-design training models for in-need industries.
- **Invest in higher education as workforce infrastructure.** Many sources recommended treating Oregon's public universities and community colleges as the core workforce and economic development infrastructure. Feedback highlighted comparatively low state investment in higher education and called for stronger alignment among postsecondary programs, applied research, and Oregon's workforce needs. Suggested priorities included expanding programs tied to high-growth occupations, supporting stackable credentials and flexible reskilling pathways, strengthening AI,

engineering, and computer science talent pipelines, and investing in shared research infrastructure for universities and industry.

> Survey respondents noted that future success hinged on the skills and training of the future workforce. Simply put by one respondent:
>
> ***"The best route to prosperity is an educated and skilled workforce."***

Additional perspectives:

- **Structural barriers to workforce participation.** There was broad support across multiple sources to address issues that prevent workforce participation, including: affordable housing, childcare, transportation, and substance abuse. Housing and childcare were consistently raised as issues that needed addressing to improve workforce participation.
  - Survey respondents frequently identified childcare costs and limited childcare availability as barriers to workforce participation.
- **Reforming K-12 education.** Sources describe Oregon's education outcomes as unacceptable, and that better alignment between K-12 districts and industry is needed. Suggestions included implementing Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) tied to funding, reviewing the number of school districts for consolidation, and using CTE programs regionally.
- **Apprenticeship reform.** The 1:1 apprenticeship ratio requirement is described as a bottleneck; local construction companies cannot meet it for public projects. Sources recommend looking at states that allow a 2:1 or 3:1 ratio. Licensing reciprocity with neighboring states is also raised as a barrier to workforce mobility.
  - Some respondents stated that their vision for success in 2-3 years would be higher apprenticeship enrollment (25%) and more aggressive, 'earn-while-you-learn' programs.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a workforce issue.** Several sources raised AI as a workforce issue requiring state attention. Suggested actions included embedding AI literacy and responsible use standards into K-12 education, expanding AI and digital skills training, and involving workers and labor representatives in shaping AI-related workforce policy. Sources differed in emphasis, with some focusing on productivity and skills development and others emphasizing worker protections and potential displacement risks.

Other Areas of Note

Survey respondents, listening session participants, and letter writers raised additional constraints and policy options that did not fit neatly within the Prosperity Council's framework. Those topics are noted below.

Energy Capacity

Several sources cited energy infrastructure, including generation, transmission, and alternative sources, as increasing constraints on economic development across the state. The challenge described is that Oregon utilities are considered highly risky for investors, driven by wildfire liability and cost-of-capital concerns, which creates reluctance among utilities to invest in infrastructure and hinders the development of potential projects.

Transportation as Core Economic Infrastructure

Multiple sources identified transportation as an economic development priority, with recommendations spanning roads, highways, goods-movement corridors, ports, public transit, and long-term transportation planning. Feedback emphasized reliable transportation infrastructure as essential for moving goods to market, supporting traded-sector industries, improving worker mobility, and reducing transportation cost burdens. Several sources also cited transportation as a barrier to workforce participation, particularly alongside housing and childcare constraints.

There is urgency around Portland's economic trajectory and its role in statewide prosperity, with broad agreement that the current tax structure, permitting timelines, housing supply, and downtown conditions are key barriers to competitiveness. Stakeholders aligned on the need for near-term, high-impact actions to improve the business climate, including tax reform, more predictable permitting, stronger economic development capacity, and accelerated housing and catalytic investments.

APPENDIX B

Prosperity Council
Survey Questions

Prosperity Council Survey Questions

Governor’s Prosperity Council

The Prosperity Council is an outside advisory group convened by Governor Kotek to help shape strategies for Oregon’s economic prosperity and growth. The council includes representatives from different regions of the state, key industries, and labor, and is focused on three main areas: business climate, workforce, and tools for growth. Its role is to develop practical recommendations for the near, medium, and long term in each of these areas.

Council meetings began in January 2026 and will conclude in June 2026, when a final report of recommendations will be delivered. This statewide survey will be circulated widely and will remain open through March 20, 2026 so the council can consider this input as it develops its recommendations. **As a note, all survey responses will be included in the public record**. The survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

* Name (first and last)

* Email address

*What is your 5-digit zip code?

Are you representing yourself or your organization/business?

- Myself
- Organization/Business
- Both

Business/Organization Information

To better understand whose input we are receiving, please tell us more about your business or organization.

What business/organization are you representing?

Are you in the public or private sector?

- Public
- Private
- Non-profit

What industry do you work in?

What is your Oregon-based team's headcount?

- 1 - 20 people
- 21-100 people
- 101-500 people
- 500-1000 people
- 1000+ people
- I don't know

Detailed Input on Focus Areas of Your Choosing

Please share specific challenges, needs, or solutions related to a specific focus area. You may submit as many ideas as you'd like.

The Prosperity Council's focus areas are defined below.

- **Business climate:** Oregon's business climate reflects the extent to which the state provides a predictable and competitive environment for employers through practical policies related to regulation, permitting, and taxation, while also maintaining long-term revenue stability to support public services and economic growth.
- **Workforce:** Oregon's workforce environment reflects how well the state's education, training, and talent development systems align Oregonians' skills with the needs of employers, particularly in growing sectors, and how effectively those systems adapt over time to support economic opportunity and a competitive labor market.
- **Tools for growth:** Oregon's economic development toolkit reflects the set of policies, programs and investments (such as site readiness, land use and permitting processes, incentives, infrastructure, and local initiatives) that shape the state's ability to attract new businesses and support the growth and expansion of existing employers.

Focus area you are providing input on

- Business climate
- Workforce
- Tools for growth

What challenge would you like addressed in the Prosperity Council's recommendations? What is the biggest barrier or friction point in this area?

What solution or specific change would you make?

What would success look like in 2–3 years?

Who has to act for this to happen? (i.e. legislature, local governments, employers, education/training partners, etc.)

What existing state programs and policies does Oregon have that are most helpful to you that you want to see continue?

What promising models or effective best practices have you seen in other states that you'd like Oregon to emulate?

Additional Input

What other ideas or input would you like the Prosperity Council to know?

APPENDIX C

Survey Data

name_first_and_last	what_is_your_5_digit_zipcode	are_you_representing_yourself_or_your_organization_business	what_business_organization_are_you_representing	are_you_in_the_public_or_private_sector	what_industry_do_you_work_in	x18	what_is_your_oregon_based_team_s_headcount	focus_area_you_are_providing_input_on_20
Katie Pettinger	97330	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Ken Brown	97477	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
NA	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Frank Evans	97201	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Chris Chenoweth	97128	Both	Acupro Oregon/MetropolitanAgencies/North Valley Computer Services	Public	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Paul Loney	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
John Kozma	44115	Organization/Business	Consolidated Precision Products Corp DBA: Selmet, Inc and Pacific Cast Technologies, Inc	Private	Metals and Machinery	Aerospace and Defense	500-1000 people	Business climate
John Kozma	44115	Organization/Business	Consolidated Precision Products Corp. DBA: Selmet, Inc and Pacific Cast Technologies, Inc.	Private	Metals and Machinery	NA	500-1000 people	Business climate
Suresh Srinivas	97231	Organization/Business	Solvers Collaborative	Private	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Christopher Tobias	97229	Both	private investment fund	Private	Bioscience	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Shawn Waterman	97223	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Heather Efriamson	97322	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Fred Weaver	97236	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
john washington	97211	Both	north northeast business association	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Carolyn Stieber	97524	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Wayne Embree	97702	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Laura E Feldman	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Nick Schott	97720	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Gabriela Orwick	97007	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Gene Merrill	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Jean SNYDER	97404	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Helen J Krieger	97124	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Wanda Pilakowski	97056	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Edwin W Sterling	97138	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Miriam Halliday	97214	Both	Workforce Southwest Washington	Non-profit	NA	Workforce Development	NA	Workforce
Hilary Nally	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Ron Otte	97107	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
KIMBERLEY CHAPUT	97103	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Andrew Tunall	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Mike Mitchell	97223	Both	Panometric LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Brandi Stack	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Jason Bolt	97212	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate

Karyn Barsa	97205	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	The fact that the Council is already focused on three areas is evidence of the underlying problem. We need an overall vision for the state first, then focus areas decided afterwards. Figure out what we want Oregon to be known for, then develop the focus areas that will be necessary to tackle to get us there. The current approach of just doing more of what we've always done won't work.	Please, please, please create an overall vision/direction/North Star before deciding which tactical challenges to take on.
Mickie Derting	97741	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	In Central Oregon, 81% of 200 employers who took a Bend Chamber survey in 2022 said that the #1 barrier to attraction and retention is housing. Workforce housing stability is a business strategy.	Have business leaders be on the boards of housing/homeless regional hubs designing solutions together with local government, non-profits, and so on. Acknowledge that housing/homeless solutions are not social issues or charity but an investment in attracting and retaining our best talent pool. (It's a savings really compared to churn cost of $47k per person up to 231% of annual salary depending on role.)
Izzy Horn	97205	Both	Calcon	Private	NA	NA	I don't know	Tools for growth	time	more time
Philip Graham	97232	Both	Ear Trumpet Labs	Private	Metals and Machinery	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Encourage worker ownership	Establish state tax policies encouraging sales of businesses to workers, and business Oregon task force providing technical assistance
Clayton Ketcham	97205	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Funding public transportation to improve the business climate	Increasing funding for public transit in the state
Matt Dittrich	98607	Organization/Business	TiE Oregon	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Enabling startups to grow into thriving and successful businesses.	Rethink QSBS. Fund venture capital!
Chris Bloome	97089	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	With rapidly changing needs within many disciplines and employer needs, especially AI, developing appropriate educational and training programs has a lot of catching up to do.	In regards to Institutes of Higher Education need to be intensely connected with current stakeholders and/or others not already identifying in understanding their needs/expectations and in ways not previously understood or even discussed
Denny conant	97301	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Spend only on essentials	Let private money do extras
Aaron Johnson	98683	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Continuity of health care in an at-will environment benefits companies without benefits to workers.	Separate health care from employment
Lane Toensmeier	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Fair tax policy that ensures revenue for public services	Tax abatements based only on evidence of economic development
Brett Campbell	97123	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Huge subsidies for data centers, highways, and big fossil fueled developments instead of investment in local businesses, walkable communities with mixed commercial and residential development allowed, so that sustainable prosperity flows from small, locally grown businesses and profits stay in Oregon, rather than going to out of state investors. These direct and indirect subsidies compete with and starve needed investments in renewable energy (solar, wind etc.), education, family farms, and homegrown local businesses.	End the huge boondoggles like data center tax expenditures/subsidies and the Columbia River highway expansion disguised as a bridge. Invest that money instead in education, local business development and sustainable, walkable communities and public transportation, which makes living and working here more affordable by reducing car dependency and the enormous subsidies to inefficient, carbon-intensive transportation and development patterns.
Susan Bladholm	97225	Organization/Business	Frog Ferry	Non-profit	Technology	Transportation	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Lack of access to public agency leaders, a deeply rooted culture of maintaining the status quo, and a lack of an innovation mindset (or spirit of curiosity).	True openness and willingness to learn from other markets. Without having a conversation, it's challenging to address questions public officials might have. The door is closed to many of us.
Robert Liebman	97205	Both	Consulting	Private	NA	Education	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Decades of underfunding of higher education	Increase appropriations to offset high tuition in order to boost access by Oregonians of low-moderate incomes
Eric Paxton	97302	Organization/Business	Paxbytes LLC	Private	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Oregon over taxes business, making it difficult to build wealth. As a equity holder and building startups recent decisions to tax QSBS feels like yet another challenge to innovation and building a business in Oregon.	Lower taxes on businesses under certain thresholds so that we can provide better paying jobs and a thriving economy
Cash Watson	97068	Organization/Business	Enterprise Mobility	Public	Business and Professional Services	Transportation and Mobility Provider	500-1000 people	Tools for growth	The current vehicle registration system is increasingly outdated and unable to meet the operational demands of today's mobility landscape. As a comprehensive mobility provider offering car and truck rentals, vehicle sales, ridesharing, and commuter transportation services, our organization relies on efficient and scalable registration processes to manage a diverse and rapidly evolving fleet. To support continued growth, ensure regulatory compliance, and enhance service delivery across the state, there is an urgent need to modernize the fleet plate registration process. Updating this system will reduce administrative delays, improve data accuracy, and enable mobility companies to better serve residents, businesses, and visitors. Modernization is not only a matter of operational efficiency, it is essential infrastructure for the future of transportation.	To support the evolving needs of Oregon's transportation ecosystem, we propose the implementation of an electronic vehicle registration system that significantly reduces reliance on paper forms and wet signatures. Transitioning to a digital process would streamline registration workflows, shorten processing times, and eliminate the environmental impact associated with shipping thousands of physical documents each year. Modernizing the fleet plate process is especially critical for large mobility providers responsible for maintaining extensive and diverse vehicle fleets. A digital, automated system would enable companies to manage registrations more efficiently, reduce annual and bi annual vehicle downtime, and ensure that vehicles remain available for the Oregonians who rely on them. Increased fleet availability directly benefits residents whose personal vehicles are undergoing repairs, have been damaged, or who simply need a reliable mobility option for travel or daily life. As a total mobility provider, we want to emphasize that the vast majority of our customers are local Oregonians seeking dependable transportation solutions. Enhancing the state's registration infrastructure is not only an
Erik Gunderson	97206-3204	Organization/Business	Gunderson Employment Law LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Infrastructure, public services, and labor pool	Growing businesses should have reliable infrastructure, support from the state, and a well-educated pool of talent to recruit employees.
Cindi Dale	97703-8675	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Options for technical training including, practical reading, writing and math skills	More use of the community college system for 9-12 graders to be duel enrolled for half of the school day
NA	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Affordability and cost of living for poor and working-class Oregonians. As a working class Oregonian I find that councils like this one rarely represent me and rarely include opportunities for our voices to actually make a difference. This survey is a case in point, as it was NOT distributed widely or early enough for me to meaningfully prepare remarks.	Expand universal preschool statewide while maintaining the funding structure that taxes high-income individuals. Preschool for All is an important program for the workforce as it enables parents to return to work while maintaining quality care for their children. In addition the program provides living wages to preschool workers who are professional educators. It also sustains small preschool providers, who are important players for the state and local economy.
Steve Salman	97478	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	We need more Career Technical Education (CTE) in our high schools, which will prepare young folks to seek employment in many skilled trades that, in spite of all of the other things that contribute to enhanced prosperity, are going to continue to be in demand: plumbers, electricians, carpenters, truck drivers, etc.	Would like to see CTE mandated in all school districts within 4 - 5 years. Small districts could pair up or work through their Education Service Districts to accomplish this. Also: set up CTE to work in conjunction with local community college programs and labor union apprentice programs.
Steven Demarest	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Accessibility to post-secondary education and training.	Reduce costs and expand training opportunities.
Melinda Merriam	97217	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	The biggest barrier is wealth hoarding. Without a large number of people who can afford to buy Oregon businesses' products, business won't grow.	Tax the wealthy, tax corporations, stop giving tax benefits like a remodeled Moda Center to a multi millionaire, and no more tax-free land giveaways
Len Norwitz	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Turnover of workers and limited institutional knowledge in workplaces. Coming from a Labor Union/worker perspective - I believe having collective bargaining agreements with workers in a specific industry or effort enhances the product of goods and services. Unions provide stability and continuity in the workforce as well as accountability. And encourage workers to seek out efforts for training and best practices.	Regardless of whether the business or industry is represented by a collective bargaining agreement .... look to involve and engage workers in decision-making and goal setting and accountability.
Marcia Kelley	97302	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	availability of childcare for workers who often have both parents in the work force	Look at what can be eliminated in tax credits to fully fund employment related day care
Kayla Boylan	97838	Organization/Business	Lamb Weston	Public	Food and Beverage	NA	1000+ people	Business climate	All of the focus areas are relevant for the success or failure of our company, but two are particularly timely and concerning. Business Climate – Currently in the State of Oregon, the business climate is predictable – nearly 100% focused on activities that are likely to make businesses either fail or decide to leave the state. From the high taxes to increased costs across the board, Oregon is arguably the most expensive state in which we operate (we do not operate in California). Costly programs and regulations are being layered, one on top of the other: increased requirements on air contaminant discharge permitting, significant restrictions on wastewater permitting, the Cleaner Air Oregon program, CPP, workforce regulations to name a few. The view seems to be – "it doesn't matter how much it costs (for permits or compliance) business will pay it." That approach is simply not sustainable, particularly in challenging or competitive global markets. Looking forward, the State's approach on the CPP will likely make or break some significant employers that are not able to pass costs along to customers. Tools for growth – Similar to above, the State is enacting tools for failure rather than growth and the OR State Budget Officer informed the legislature of that exact scenario. The State is enacting ambiguous policy for reductions with no clear metrics for obtaining those aggressive reductions. In many cases, BAERs or BACTs are already incorporated into business practices, leaving an unclear path for continued reductions. Again on CPP – this past and upcoming regulation is an unforced error on the part of the State. It is an executive action that is out of sync with the broader established Cap and Trade markets of its neighbors and should be postponed and adjusted to accomplish the states' climate protection goals and not bankrupt businesses in the process.	For the CPP, immediately stop and rescind the executive order establishing the program and devise legislation, with input from all stakeholders, to interact with neighboring states. Often the state will seek input from stakeholders, but it is obvious during the proceedings that any input from business is somehow treated as biased by both the agency and adverse interest groups and not in the state's interest. This needs to change. Business as the employers and tax revenue creators are the economic engine for the state. Basing virtually most decisions on the views of the recipients of state spending has put the state in the situation it now faces. The state has recognized companies as EITEs and has studies detailing the potential risks from such entities (2018 Vivid Study). The state needs to act in a manner that will allow such businesses to operate and potentially grow in Oregon. The current proposals do not reflect that reality. The existing CPP structure is going to push business out of the state to meet the demands established in Table 5 and Table 8 of OAR 340-273-9000. The current regulations only allow 20% of CCI credits to demonstrate compliance (Table 5) while the emission reduction targets the state
Nierada Nititadakul	97223	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	There's a lot that can be changed when it comes to the business climate in Oregon. 1. Is the way that companies perceive Oregon when considering to invest and grow their business here - outside of Oregon there's a marketing issue in attracting investors to come here. 2. There's many stop gaps to the regulations when organizations want to growth, because of all of the permitting involved companies are getting more attractive growth offers to move out of state. 3. There is a disconnect when it comes to the tax laws and trying to build business incentives, yes we have the R&D Credit for the semi-conductors, but we should consider bringing it back from a state-level offering so that manufacturing can grow. If that industry grew by 11% that's millions of dollars given back into the Oregon treasury through income tax. We can create a revenue cap for businesses over a certain amount so state funding for these incentives can be focused on small and medium business growth.	I'd like to see tax laws implemented that impact businesses directly. When you have businesses that thrive better in the private space - it allows for steadier job growth, and resources to be given back to the publics.
Rob Bennett	97202	Both	My consultancy - Patternworks	Private	NA	Urban and community development	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Statewide tax overhaul	Identify 2-3 complete overhaul recommendations of statewide tax structure, including a separate track for Metro Portland, to include introducing a modest sales tax and reduction of corporate and individual income tax rates, streamlining the number of taxes, and redressing property tax restrictions through proposed constitutional amendment. We need to build a powerful and simple agenda to take to the public regarding modernizing our tax system to focus on supporting small biz, biz growth, and overall competitiveness. The narrative of tax the rich should be reframed as creating a fair system that balances the needs of all Oregonians, vs pitting us against one another in a form of class warfare.
Tara May	97818	Organization/Business	Threemile Canyon Farms	Private	Food and Beverage	Agriculture	101-500 people	Business climate	We appreciate that Oregon's environmental regulatory framework shows a commitment to ensuring Oregonians can enjoy all that makes our state beautiful, safe and prosperous both in the present and for generations to come. When developed by experts and in consultation with stakeholders, we have seen that Oregon regulators can achieve this goal. One recent example is the rulemaking process undertaken by the Oregon Department of Agriculture that is designed to address elevated nitrate levels in the LUBGWMA. This collaborative effort illustrates that when experts and impacted communities work together, the resulting regulation is stronger and works as intended. While we may not have agreed with every aspect of the final rules, we appreciated the process and believe the rules can be implemented. This is not always the case when working with Oregon regulatory agencies. We understand that not every agency employee is a subject matter expert, nor do we expect that, and our request is that the agency acknowledges this simple fact by seeking support from experts with greater regularity. Being receptive to expertise means greater opportunity for success and efficiency. Those of us in agriculture can tell pretty quickly when an agency lacks a basic understanding of agronomy and modern farming. We understand that this is not always the fault of the agency, but we are troubled by the inability to consult with those who have the education and experience that they do not possess.	We believe that any meaningful change will require greater accountability of agency leadership for fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement, as well as the regulations that they develop. When poorly conceived regulation becomes official, we can assume that lack of accountability is at the core.
Taylor Jackson	97215	Both	Generation Solar	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	I don't know	Business climate	I'm a long term serial entrepreneur focused on sustainability who just moved to Oregon for my partner's job. Every potential investor and cofounder I talk to says I should relocate before starting a business. The tax and regulatory environment on businesses is too regressive to attract outside capital or cofounders.	Keep a high income tax on high earners - that's fine. But all of the oregon specific shenanigans with the qsbs deduction, bonus depreciation, and other business specific taxes are enormous sandbags on achieving a vision. Business is already hard enough without them - I would seriously consider moving before starting a high growth business, which is sad - I like it
Gabe Genauer	97212	Both	Groundswell Development Inc.	Private	Business and Professional Services	Construction Management and Real estate development	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Remove barriers to permitting. Provide incentives to reduce homelessness and crime.	Provide advocates for people trying to build / improve commercial and multi-family to expedite permitting and avoid bureaucratic quagmires. Also, provide incentives for organizations and efforts that actually reduce crime and homelessness, performance and results based incentives.
Helen Moss	97323	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	More money for education, especially higher education.	Stop giving tax incentives to businesses.
Jordan Rice	97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The tax situation, especially in MultCo, is driving investors and investment out of the city and out of the state. Many of the angel investors I speak with, and higher net worth folks who would fund or start future business and startups are telling me they are actively either planning or considering a move. It's eroding what little ecosystem we had left. I myself am finding it harder to justify staying. It makes me incredibly sad.	End PFA completely. Stop taxes that are voted in by ballot but only kick in for certain highly mobile earners. Make the services, safety, and cleanliness equivalent with the tax rate. We can't have less for more much longer.
NA	97220	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The biggest friction I see is the type of policies related to regulation, permitting, and taxation, while also maintaining long-term revenue stability to support public services and economic growth. Especially with the passage of HB 4102, that Privatized DEQ Permits. Plus also the friction of the expedition of building out data centers in Oregon.	That there is some sort of oversight of how businesses permits will be expedited with the passage of HB 4102.
NA	97914	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Getting rid of trump	Vote

Graham Trainor	97202	Organization/Business	Climate Jobs Oregon	Non-profit	Metals and Machinery	Clean energy	1000+ people	Workforce
Edith Bayer	97405	Organization/Business	Oregon Department of Energy	Public	NA	Energy	101-500 people	Tools for growth
Dave Dillon	97220	Organization/Business	Food Northwest, the trade association for food manufacturers in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Richard Glassman	97204	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Marcus Kauffman	97310	Organization/Business	Oregon Mass Timber Coalition	Public	Forestry and Wood Products	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Holly Junge	97330	Organization/Business	HP Inc., Corvallis, OR	Private	Technology	NA	1000+ people	Business climate
Maria Torres	97007	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Sara Odendahl	97702	Organization/Business	Bend Chamber	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Bryan Steelman	97212	Organization/Business	Por Qué No Taqueria	Public	Food and Beverage	NA	21-100 people	Business climate
Charles Gehr	97540	Both	Native Fish Society	Non-profit	NA	Native Fish Conservation	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Jennifer Krauel	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Nicholas Farina	97212	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Jessie Kochaver	97211	Organization/Business	The Oregon Clean Grid Collaborative (OCGC)	Non-profit	NA	Clean energy	21-100 people	Tools for growth
Jake Madison	97826	Organization/Business	Madison Ranches Inc.	Private	NA	Agriculture	101-500 people	Business climate
Eric Rosenfeld	97205	Both	Oregon Venture Fund	Private	NA	venture capital	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Nora Apter	97213	Organization/Business	Climate Solutions	Non-profit	NA	Clean energy	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Liisa Bozinovic	97201	Organization/Business	Oregon Life Sciences	Non-profit	Bioscience	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Amanda Duncan	97005	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth

Brian Stewart	97221	Both	Electrify Now	Non-profit	NA	Clean energy advocacy	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	
Josh Parks	97221	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	SB 1507
Nate Stokes	97027	Both	Climate Jobs Oregon	Non-profit	Metals and Machinery	NA	1000+ people	Workforce	
Joy Gillespie	97233	Both	Llc	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	NA	Business climate	
Alice Dale	97201	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	
Yelena Nowak	97236	Organization/Business	Oregon Trawl Commission	Public	Food and Beverage	Fishing industry	1 - 20 people	Business climate	
Margaret Retz	97034	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Dan Dias	97123	Organization/Business	The City of Hillsboro, representing approximately 114,000 residents, 5,000 businesses, and a significant concentration of Oregon's High Tech and Advanced Manufacturing ecosystem.	Public	NA	We work with and across many industries with an emphasis to Technology, BioScience, and Food and Beverage.	500-1000 people	Business climate	
Noah Bernstein	97203	Both	Bernstein's Bagels	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	
Karl G. Walrod	97408	Both	Wildish Sand & Gravel Co.	Private	NA	Sand & Gravel, Construction ,Asphalt, Mining	101-500 people	Business climate	
Sasha Keller	97218	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	
Will Hollingsworth	97210	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Chandra LeGue	97405	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Pat Smith	97336	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	
Jennifer Lynch	97702	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	
Rick Turoczy	97202	Both	PIE (Portland Incubator Experiment)	Non-profit	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	
Mark Linehan	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Fred Jones	97330	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	
aaron coury	97217	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	
Catherine Stearns	97330	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	
Sarah Lochner	97216	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	
annie capestany	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	
Leland Vaughan	97232	Organization/Business	Outlet PDX	Private	NA	Arts & Education	1 - 20 people	NA	NA
Karla Marks	97301-2715	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	
PAUL RIEK	97212	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	
Shannon Llewellyn	97217	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	
NA	97302	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
colleen moloney	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	
Seth Johnson	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Bella Johnson	97015	Organization/Business	Pacific Seafood	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1000+ people	Business climate	
James Archuleta	97267	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
David Price	97236	Both	Coyote Logic LLC	Private	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	

Tammy L Inglis-Drew	97477	Organization/Business	Aims Mobile Nursing	Private	Business and Professional Services	Healthcare	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Regulatory demands and the high cost of doing business in Oregon continue to present significant challenges, particularly for small and mid-sized businesses. Complex and often overlapping regulations can create uncertainty, slow decision-making, and require substantial administrative time and resources to navigate. In addition, rising costs related to labor, compliance, energy, and taxes make it difficult for businesses to maintain competitiveness—especially when compared to neighboring states. To support business growth and economic vitality, it would be helpful to streamline regulatory processes, improve interagency coordination, and provide clearer guidance and timelines. Creating more predictability in permitting and compliance requirements would allow businesses to plan and invest with greater confidence. Additionally, exploring ways to reduce cost burdens—such as targeted incentives, fee reductions, or support programs—could help retain existing businesses and attract new investment to Oregon.	In addition to considering the implementation of a sales tax—which I support—policy decisions should strive for a balanced approach that addresses environmental priorities and community impacts while also fostering a strong, competitive business environment.	The successful recruitment and retention of a select number of strong, legacy "keystone" companies in Oregon.	Legislature and Governor	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
David Mick	97201	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Management of funds	Proper policy	Greater business opportunities	Local government and Legislature	Funding and youth training
Stephany Koehne	97355	Organization/Business	Kids and Company of Linn County	Non-profit	NA	Social Services/Early Education	101-500 people	Workforce	I want to state the I completely support the concept of universal preschool for all (and also understand that is not what this work group is convened to investigate)... With that said, there are serious capacity issues that will stop it from being successful at the state level (similar to what Multnomah County is experiencing) related to workforce, which is the purview of this survey. There are simply not enough people being trained in early learning at the level that will allow organizations/businesses/schools to be able to staff with a workforce that then allows for the high level, quality services that are desired for the early learning field. You can throw all the money in the world at the idea of investing in universal preschool (which of course the state does not have nor should the state desire to do so, but without capacity of a high quality, well trained workforce, that money is going to go unspent as the capacity to open up centers/create more slots will not happen. Which will then impact economic growth, as parents cannot find quality care for their children while they themselves work in other industries or seek training for job advancement.	Look at the idea of building training systems (whether at community colleges or other partners) that allows for a 1 year certificate - at a very low cost- that meets the equivalent of a lead teacher qualification required within the state of Oregon for child care licensing. Right now, most of our staff are either trained in-house through our own CDA (Child Development Associate) credential prorgam, or have to incur large expenses getting their degree, whether it be an AA/AS or BA/BS. Many people are not willing to incur those costs in order to work for child care facilities, due to the return on financial investment is simply not there for them, leading to a lack of qualified workforce, and inability to open up more availability of childcare for the workforce.	Credentialed workforce meets the demand of available funding to open up classrooms/centers.	Employers, education/training	Child care resource network agencies.
Anders Hart	97212	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Cuts to public transportation are making it harder for Oregonians to get where they need to go without the financial burden of car ownership. At the same time, our state is spending billions of dollars on highway expansions (Interstate Bridge Replacement (IBR), Rose Quarter) that will undermine the state's long-term fiscal outlook, lock in polluting infrastructure, and keep Oregonians trapped in dependence on volatile gasoline prices.	Scale back freeway megaprojects and increase funding for operating and capital expenses for transit and active transportation projects.	Reversing TriMet and other transit agency cuts and increasing these agencies' budgets; right-sizing the IBR and Rose Quarter projects so they don't increase lane capacity and increase funding for active transportation and transit.	Legislature, the governor, and local elected officials	TriMet and Safe Routes to School
John Bates	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Continuing population growth will help the state economically. The best way to do this is with policies that draw people in with improved quality of life.	Preserve the universal preschool program in the states largest population county (Multnomah). Prioritize transit funding for public transit and bike lanes. Portland's and Oregon's reputation as a progressive place that cares about pedestrians and cyclists is a key selling point for many people considering moving here.	Fully rolled out preschool for all in Multnomah County. Restoring full bus and train service across the state which is being cut due to funding shortages. Change zoning laws and elevator size laws to allow for condos and apartments with more desirable floorplans cross the state.	State and local governments	Strong protections for trans people and renters
Kim McCarty	97202-5243	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Union are closing down some apprenticeship programs due to a lack Of public work. Some qualifications are keeping people out of in demand jobs like mental health counseling.	Reduce certification paths. Support unions to find other ways to train new skilled workers.	Everyone that graduates from high school has a path to school , apprenticeship or work.	All	NA
Misty Burris	97424	Both	CO2T LLC, Community System Navigators	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Industrial waste biochar distribution	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Climate action investments	Encouraging more stakeholders to the table	Significant increases in GHG reduction projects qualified through rules of engagement	Increase programs like DEQ CCI fund	The CCI fund is a great start to reinvesting, I appreciate the Resilience Team for the Governor
Kamelah Adams	97212	Both	Mimi's Fresh Tees	Public	Outdoor Gear and Apparel	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Businesses need additional resources to grapple with rising costs of inflation. Additional consumer spending has changed which impacts our bottom line.	Incorporate additional AI tools into my website.	We need more policies and funding to directly support small businesses especially retail focused businesses.	State legislatures, local governments, and chambers.	I would love to see a retail grant that invites new businesses to commercial space in certain areas or districts. Portland Metro Chambers offered a similar program in 2023.
Doug Klotz	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Ability to build more housing in close-in parts of cities, to lower housing costs and improve the environment, limit emissions.	Build more housing in UGB's. Raise "single-stair" limit from 4 to 6 stories. Allow smaller, European-style elevators. More modular housing, & fund transit, cycling infrastructure to reduce transportation costs.	Drop in housing prices, especially mult-family. Increase transit, bike/walk use, decrease auto use	Legislature (elevators), zoning over-rides at state level, state support for local rezones to allow more housing, especially in high-opportunity areas, and in entire neighborhoods, not just on busy arterials, for better quality of life for residents.	DLCD planning
Casey Nielsen	97420	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Crime. The criminal homeless and drug abusers make our streets unsafe. They steal from individuals and businesses hampering growth.	Cut the size of State Government by 30%. Invest in public's safety and return the rest to the taxpayers	More criminals in prison and less homeless destroying our cities.	State Government	None, cut everything but safety by 30%
Steven Preece	97035	Both	Gorges Beer Co.	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Very hard to pinpoint one. The general climate is that Oregon, and especially Portland, are anti business. Taxes are too high, regulations too strict. Regulations in place to protect individuals are hurting small businesses and scaring away big businesses.	Be more business friendly. Put business-minded leaders in power. Shift thinking to where we understand that without employers, there will be fewer jobs, fewer taxes, less prosperity. One specific change is the tip credit: It makes zero sense. If a "livable wage" is $16.30/hour, why must bartenders, cooks and servers make $30-35/hour? It is too difficult in hospitality to hire a teenager to do entry-level jobs at that high of a rate.	Welcoming cities. Relaxed employers. Prosperity.	Local Governments and legislature.	Hard to think of any. Oregon is incredibly harsh toward businesses. Perhaps some of the focus on street plazas and livable spaces. But those are more focused on individuals than on businesses.
Sam Brier	97202	Both	Academic experiences abroad	Private	Business and Professional Services	Travel and education	1 - 20 people	Business climate	High taxes, high homeless population trashing the city. Portland is in a death spiral and I'm leaving.	The homeless should not be housed in our neighborhoods. All services need to be in the industrial area and they should only be allowed to camp, threaten people, walk around naked, urinate, dedicate, start fires and leave trash in that area. The city is wasting so much money with rapid response.	Fix homeless problem, reduce taxes and make a the business environment friendly. Learn from other states. It's so bad here I've decided to move. My business will never pay taxes here again.	Common sense	Nothing. You need to tear it down and start over. I've never wanted a republican to win office here but I think it's necessary now. Some balance. Business is not evil.
Erin Lair	97824	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Oregon's workforce system is not designed for rural economic ecosystems. The current structure assumes scale, proximity, and specialization—conditions that do not exist in much of rural Oregon. The biggest barrier is system fragmentation combined with geographic reality. Education, workforce training, and economic development operate in silos, with separate funding streams, accountability measures, and planning processes. In rural communities, where distances are large and populations are small, this fragmentation results in: Training programs that do not align to regional industry needs Students who graduate without clear or accessible pathways into local careers Employers who cannot find workers despite having willing local populations Additionally, "access" is often defined as program availability, not whether individuals can realistically participate given transportation, housing, and broadband constraints.	I would recommend establishing Regional Workforce Alignment Compacts, with a specific rural model. These compacts would: Formally align K–12, higher education regional colleges/universities, workforce boards, and regional employers Be funded and held accountable as a single system rather than siloed programs Use shared data to track outcomes from education through employment Within that structure, Oregon should: Fund micro-pathways and stackable credentials Short-term, industry-aligned training that reflects rural workforce needs (e.g., ag tech, trades, healthcare support roles), rather than relying solely on full program completion models. Invest in grow-your-own workforce strategies Particularly in high-need sectors like education, healthcare, and trades, with incentives tied to local placement and retention. Redefine access in policy and funding models Incorporate transportation, housing, and broadband as core components of workforce participation—not external issues. Align accountability across systems Shift toward shared outcomes such as job placement, wage growth, and local retention, rather than isolated system metrics	In 2–3 years, success would include: Measurable increases in local job placement and retention for graduates in rural regions Sustainability for regional universities and colleges as a critical cornerstone of workforce development A clear set of regional workforce pathways that students and families can navigate from middle school through employment Employers reporting improved ability to hire locally for critical roles Increased participation in training programs due to reduced access barriers (transportation, housing, flexible delivery models) At least several rural regions operating under formalized workforce compacts with shared goals and coordinated funding Success would also mean the state has shifted from measuring isolated program outputs to tracking end-to-end workforce outcomes.	This requires coordinated action across multiple levels: State Legislature: Provide flexible funding authority, support pilot models for regional compacts, and align policy definitions of access and workforce outcomes. State Agencies (ODE, HECC, Business Oregon, etc.): Align program requirements, reduce duplication, and support shared accountability structures across education and workforce systems. Local Education and Training Partners (K–12, community colleges, ESDs): Co-design pathways with employers and participate in regional alignment efforts. Employers and Industry Groups: Engage as active partners in defining skill needs, offering work-based learning, and supporting local talent pipelines. Local Governments and Regional Partnerships: Help align workforce strategies with housing, transportation, and infrastructure planning.	Oregon has several strong foundational efforts that should be sustained and built upon: Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and Perkins funding Regional workforce partnerships and sector strategies Community college and University workforce and training programs Youth apprenticeship and work-based learning initiatives Integrated planning efforts that attempt to streamline district and regional work These efforts are valuable but would benefit from greater alignment, reduced fragmentation, and stronger connections to regional economic needs, particularly in rural areas.
NA	97232	Both	NA	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	21-100 people	Workforce	Cuts to transit. I need my team in office and gas prices are through the sun roof.	Fund trimet fully. No excuses for tardiness or absences	Trimet running across the city, every 15 minutes	Kotek	NA
Kathy Bowman	97846	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	short term solutions to long term issues.	Share your development plans or at least goals for the medium term. (2-3 years is too short. a year ago gas and interest were less expensive and the national spend was decreasing, yet we had 100-200,000 more jobs/year in growth. things can change quickly, so solutions should at least have a "what if" component for the basic elements ANY solution relies on.	if we get rid of ICE and restore health care and worker protections, we'll be starting at a much more secure and less expensive base. "What if ICE tackles the mom of a 3/year old from behind and abducts her to Clark County jail with no contact to her family in Portland" is an expensive destabilizer.	The legislature, and they need an ethics component before they even address this stuff because in my direct experience, there's some bait and switch happening, especially with shell efforts.	USDA has (or used to have) some very good community development programs, especially during timber industry shake ups (thinking specifically of the bail out of the overbidders and when the mills left - which was absolutely predictable because the history of timber production has shown that the industry moves from region to region over more than 100 years.
Ingmar Van Glabbeek	97115	Both	Vanglabbeek LLC	Private	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Oregon's workforce development infrastructure largely routes workers through employer-controlled training pipelines, leaving workers with little collective voice in shaping curriculum, wage floors, or career pathways. Sectoral bargaining gaps mean that even unionized workers in fragmented industries (home care, construction trades, tech subcontracting) lack coordinated standards.	Establish a Sectoral Workforce Standards Board model -- similar to California's Fast Food Council or Washington's agricultural labor standards boards -- where workers, employers, and state agencies jointly set wage floors, safety standards, and training requirements by industry sector. Fund union apprenticeship programs as the primary delivery mechanism for workforce development dollars, rather than employer-controlled training grants.	Sectoral boards operational in at least three industries (care economy, construction, hospitality). Union apprenticeship enrollment up 25%. Wage compression reduced in targeted sectors.	Oregon Legislature (enabling statute), Bureau of Labor and Industries, BOLI-affiliated labor-management partnerships, community colleges as delivery partners.	Oregon Apprenticeship and Training Division, BOLI wage and hour enforcement, Oregon Worker Relief Fund.
Zack Culver	97148	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	We need our business to want to stay and attract more businesses to Oregon, We also need Energy Choice for New home owners so that we dont create a Monopoly for power companies to continue to rais rates out of reach for Home owners and tennants	Natural gas hook ups need the same incentive as Power hookups on housing projects, need to eliminate the ability to add fees and taxes for Gas utility hook ups. Natural Gas will transition to hydrogen if we allow it to be part of our energy transition. Cleaner energy comes in many forms don't be scared to try it.	More energy choice in Oregon Nuclear Small Modular Reactor (SMR), Hydrogen, Natural gas transition plan to hydrogen. Transmission lines all operating at new capacities and expanded as necessary for Housing and business needs. Transportaion plan that provides predictable travel times for commuters to work and freight delivery too and crossing our state.	We are all in this together. We need to get our communities including rural communities to feel like Oregon is working for and serving them.	Health Care, Oregon paid leave and sick time for all workers, Oregon college savings plan, this is a great program that more people need to know about. Need to continue to grow the ways it helps support our youth into becoming adults reducing financial pressures they encounter
Justin Green	97818	Organization/Business	Water for Eastern Oregon	Non-profit	Food and Beverage	Agriculture and food processing	21-100 people	Business climate	Oregon's environment and natural resources are what makes Oregon such a wonderful place to live. However, businesses are suffering from environmental regulations that are misinformed and not based on science. Many state agencies lack the subject matter expertise to effectively develop meaningful regulations. This results in astronomically high regulatory costs that provide no additional environmental protections.	We would like to see Oregon state agencies develop subject matter expertise and take the time to meaningfully engage with regulated entities.	Agencies and regulated entities having a collaborative relationship and regulations being developed that are reflective of science and allow businesses to prosper while at the same time protecting the environment.	The legislature and governor need to hold agency leaders accountable for the regulations their agency developed and for the culture they foster.	Industrial symbiosis and the ability to reuse water.
Dave Peticolas	97203-2774	Myself	Portland: Neighbors Welcome	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	NA	Build More housing of all types. Make reforms to allow single-stair apartments and lower-cost elevators	Rapid increase in the production of missing middle housing that is affordable and high-quality	The state legislature and city administrations, particularly Portland.	NA
NA	97209	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	The state's already-existing workforce must be invested in by centering workers' needs and ensuring their employers match our Oregonian values of equity, fairness and creativity. Employers who reject any of those values should not be catered to.	Invest in Oregonian workers by expanding paid leave programs, offering incentives for families with working parents looking to relocate to Oregon, prioritizing business leaders who share our values and do not simply seek to exploit our uniquely-talented and capable working class. Anyone who wishes to do business in Oregon must be held to stringent standards for what investing in Oregon actually means. They should want to do business here for more than cheap land and tax incentives.	It would look like all business owners and leaders paying their fair share of state and local taxes, incentives for businesses smaller than $1M in revenue to encourage their stay and support here, prioritize small business support over hand-outs to large corporations seeking to exploit our workforce.	Legislature and local governments can begin understanding "prosperity" as a concept that moves beyond financial bountifulness and into true community activation. "Prosperity" to me is not revenue or expanding capex, "prosperity" to me is a place where workers and their families can live comfortably, both monetarily and emotionally.	Pre-School For All statewide, without the repeal of Multnomah County's own program.
Isaac L Griffith	97209	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Business landlords exorting rent from small businesses.	Reduce power of local landlords that own business property and cede it to local government	Cheaper rent for everyone.	Government needs to listen to everyone and not just the few rich people that can get constant meetings and access to them	NA
Chloe Becker	97225	Organization/Business	Portland General Electric	Private	NA	Utility	1000+ people	Tools for growth	Electric utilities power all sectors of the state's economy, and financially stable, investable electric utilities are vital to Oregon's economic growth. Current regulatory and policy frameworks, particularly as they relate to wildfire, have led investors and lenders to view Oregon utilities as high risk. This challenge means higher customer rates and threatens utilities' ability to protect residential and small business customers from rate increases while we work to meet the region's clean energy goals, provide reliable service and support economic growth. Looking directly at Portland General Electric (PGE), more than two-thirds of the state's commercial and industrial activity occurs within our service area. PGE directly and indirectly drives $4.6 billion in economic output and supports a total of 9,421 jobs. Investor-owned utilities like PGE bring the scale of capital needed to fuel economic development. That capital comes at a cost—and wildfire liability risk is pushing it higher. Wildfire risk is already impacting credit ratings and borrowing costs. Between 2020 and 2023, wildfire risk was a contributing factor in the credit downgrades of nearly 100 utilities. While PGE currently maintains an investment grade credit rating, wildfire risk is top of mind for ratings agencies when looking at Oregon utilities. Maintaining strong credit quality is essential for sustaining reliable operations and protecting customers from long-term, compounding economic impacts. Beyond the impact on credit ratings and borrowing costs, unbounded wildfire risk is also driving insurance increases—we've seen our annual premium increase by nearly 180% in the last five years. This issue impacts all types of electric utilities, both large and small, across the state and must be addressed for Oregon to meet its economic development goals and prosper. While conversations on the issue have happened in the Capitol during past sessions, progress has been hampered by political challenges and ongoing litigation from past wildfires.	Under current law, potential liability for Oregon utilities is unbounded and potentially catastrophic, even when utilities operate industry-leading, regulator approved programs to keep communities safe. As described in the Oregon Department of Energy's 2025 statewide energy strategy, "Oregon needs to arrive at a balanced approach to reduce the uncertainty around [wildfire] liability, which raises significant financial risks for utilities and ratepayers, and at the same time maintain avenues for accountability and redress after a fire." Oregon should enact liability limits that balance accountability, contain customer costs, and support the investments customers rely on.	Success would look like Oregon enacting policy solutions to address unbounded wildfire risk in the utility sector and customers seeing a reduction in upward pressure on rates. With policy action moving, focus can shift to building out needed infrastructure and new development.	Addressing wildfire liability requires the Legislature to change Oregon law.	Related to wildfire, Oregon has a robust wildfire mitigation program, codified in SB 762 (2021 session). Oregon's utilities have developed and implemented industry leading wildfire prevention programs that are continually being updated. Action to address wildfire liability risk adds to this existing mitigation work.
Diana Rempe	97217	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	We should be focusing on essential work— education, healthcare, public works. Please provide Good jobs while increasing the health and availability of our city and state. Things like data centers and redoing sports stadiums are giveaways to rich people who don't care at all about rich people. And these projects provide a few short term jobs that are often outsourced anyway. The focus should be on robust liveability for Oregonians. That includes full support of preschool for all across Oregon – – copying the multnomah County model, not a watered down version. Public schools should be fully funded and private schools should get zero tax breaks. We desperately need a billionaires tax like the one in California.	The biggest change that must be made is to change the governors office's focus on trickle down economics and courting big business to providing meaningful services for Oregonians. A great example is the Kotek administration's terrible focus on data centers. Data centers are destabilizing the grid, using previous water, killing salmon by heating it abd increasing electricity rates for regular rate payers while making our already weak climate goals even weaker. We shouldn't allow data centers in this state but if we have to they should be paying a significantly higher electric and water use rate than ordinary users. Why am I subsidizing people like Mark Zuckerberg, Elon Musk, Jeff Bezos and	Robust preschool for all, Oregon health plan, lots of social housing and strong meaningful climate rules. The current oil shock is a great opportunity to look at how our government can serve the people (in the shirt and long term) and survive things like this and recessions, depressions, etc. Which is why we must have a robust and resilient economy focused on providing essential services to all the people, powered by efficiency, conservation and homegrown (solar, wind) power.	Ever sector of government together with the people	PCEF, preschool for all, energy trust of Oregon, CRITFC, Oregon Health Plan (I recognize that these are almost all non state plans but can serve as models for state programs).
Brian Frank	97212	Both	Brian Frank Consulting LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Creating a stronger middle class.	Social programs, long term financing for this through getting rid of the kicker and creating a more progressive tax structure	NA	legislature	Preschool for all in Portland is a great model for the type of programs we need to see more of
Erik Ace	97221	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Make it more affordable for working people to live in PDX. Do not prioritize businesses over families.	Higher taxes on people like myself who can afford to support policies like childcare, public transportation, moving the CEI hub, and affordable housing options	Higher wages, more government support for families.	Legislature, local governments, business leaders.	Preschool for all, PDX art tax, PCCEF.
Jamie Ely	97322	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	We could certainly see improvements in accountability in education, including regular assessment so we can see how students are doing, and then help them sooner so they can contribute to the workforce in meaningful ways. Literacy in Oregon is at a detrimental low, improving opportunities should be a priority.	Programs that encourage accountability for schools and students as well as finacial support for organizations that are helping to improve skills for the workforce such as the Boys and Girls Club and other non-profits.	Increased literacy rate and graduation rate. Also less young folks leaving the state to seek work in other areas.	All groups - local and state in conjunction with education/training partners.	What is working for workforce is the HECC's investment in workforce training, and the Youth Development Division's investment in community-based organizations to help fill the academic and enrichment gap for youth
Elliot Thistlebriar	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Oregon's workforce conversation is dominated by employer needs ("talent pipelines," training programs, credential ladders) while the more basic question gets quietly sidestepped: are these jobs actually paying enough to live on? The answer is increasingly no. The deeper problem is that public money flows into training workers for positions that still don't cover rent. Programs are built around what employers want, at wages employers prefer, and workers come out the other end with credentials, but not much leverage. The structural drivers (stagnant wages, weakened unions, the spread of gig and contract work) don't get touched. Portable skills, collective bargaining rights, real wage floors: these barely register in the conversation.	Oregon's workforce development system should be rebuilt around worker power and economic security, not employer convenience. That means: 1. Attach labor standards to every dollar of public workforce training. Any employer tapping state-subsidized pipelines must pay a living wage tied to regional costs, offer benefits, and stay neutral when workers organize. 2. Direct funding toward worker-led and union-affiliated training programs over employer-controlled ones, so workers leave with credentials they own rather than skills that chain them to one company. 3. Create a state Office of Worker Organizing Support to give workers free legal help, know-your-rights education, and logistical backup. Right now, that fight is lopsided. 4. Expand Oregon's sectoral bargaining pilot to set wages and benefits industry-wide. Employer-by-employer bargaining lets companies play workers against each other; sector-wide standards close that off. 5. Make income support during workforce transitions long enough and generous enough that workers can actually finish retraining rather than being pushed by rent and hunger back into the first bad job that'll have them. Prosperity isn't a GDP number. It's whether Oregon's working	For workers directly: Union density up meaningfully across Oregon's key sectors (healthcare, logistics, retail, and the green economy) with at least 25% unionization in any sector receiving significant public workforce investment. Graduates of state-subsidized training programs earning wages that track at or above the true cost of living in their region, not just above the state minimum. Fewer Oregonians working two or three jobs to cover rent and groceries. For the system: Every major workforce training dollar traceable to an employer who meets enforceable labor standards, with a public accountability dashboard showing compliance. Worker-led training programs receiving a proportional share of Oregon's workforce development budget. The Office of Worker Organizing Support having assisted workers in hundreds of campaigns statewide. For the broader economy: Oregon's Gini coefficient actually moving with income inequality shrinking, not just GDP climbing while wealth pools at the top. Healthcare and childcare no longer the primary barriers keeping Oregon workers out of retraining programs. The bottom-line test: Can an Oregon worker without a college degree, working one full-time	Several actors share responsibility here, but some matter more than others. The Oregon Legislature has the most to do: passing enforceable labor standards tied to workforce development funding, supporting worker-led training programs, expanding sectoral bargaining legislation, and ensuring income support is actually accessible during job transitions. Governor Kotek doesn't need to wait for legislation. She can use existing executive authority to attach labor standards to state contracts and publicly subsidized employers now, and she can direct the Workforce and Talent Development Board to rewrite its funding criteria so worker outcomes (not employer satisfaction scores) are what get measured. She should also be appointing worker advocates and union representatives to bodies like this Council, which currently tilts toward business. Large employers (especially those receiving public subsidies) need to stop fighting union organizing and pay wages that reflect what it actually costs to live here. Unions and worker organizations should keep organizing, especially in sectors that receive public workforce investment. Training institutions need	Labor Protections Worth Defending: Oregon's equal pay law. One of the strongest in the nation, prohibiting pay discrimination based on protected class and restricting employer use of salary history Oregon's statewide preemption of local minimum wage rollbacks combined with the tiered regional minimum wage structure, which at least acknowledges that Portland's cost of living differs from rural Oregon. Oregon OSHA's worker rights protections, including anti-retaliation provisions for workers who report unsafe conditions Workforce and Training Programs: Oregon's apprenticeship programs where they are genuinely union-affiliated. These are the model workforce development programs and should be the rule, not the exception. Oregon Adult Basic Skills and GED programs. Literacy and education access that workers need before sector-specific training means anything. Oregon's paid family and medical leave program (Paid Leave Oregon). A real achievement that needs adequate funding and protection from being quietly gutted. Economic Support Infrastructure: Oregon Health Plan (Medicaid expansion). Healthcare access is a workforce issue; workers can't pursue training or take career
Julie Guzman	97123	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Oregon is too business friendly and that detracts from quality of life of all Oregonians. For starters this council shouldn't be so heavily tilted towards business - if you were truly trying to determine needs it would have at least as many labor/ordinary Oregonians on the council as business reps. We need DEI, we need regulations, we need wages that match the cost of living, we need transparency from employers on what wages they are offering and they should have to have an actual opening to post an open position (not just a means of intimidating current employees). I don't want Oregon to be the "prosperity" playground of billionaires. This is my home and my family's home and when your entire focus is on how to make wealthy people more wealthy (because ultimately it is wealthy people running the "businesses"), you have left Oregonians behind.	Wage transparency, wages tied to executive pay or heavily tax executive pay that exceeds a certain ratio (500/1000:1 ratios are absurd), tax corporations! stop using tax payer $s to subsidize billionaires. Tax payers are paying for the trailblazers stadium - owners of teams should have to pay for their stadiums, again absolutely absurd that I have to pay to build a better stadium for the Blazers while Dundon continues to make profit hand over fist. Regulate pollution! Transparency for data centers - how much water and electricity are they using? How much are they paying for these resources vs tax payer subsidies? No non disclosures between businesses and municipalities! I have a right to know what my "representatives" are agreeing to - its outrageous that non disclosures exist between governmental entities and businesses. What pollutants and in what amounts are data centers and other polluters (Intel) putting into our air? And stop cutting down our trees and forests for businesses! Get serious about climate catastrophe - its upon us and you have your heads in the sand. You won't escape the effects either and the billionaires aren't going to allow you in their precious bunkers.	An Oregon for Oregonians not billionaires. More trees, not less to fight climate change in our area - we can't impact what other locales do but Oregon can be doing so much better for Oregonians. Getting off car culture - instead of continuing to build more roads (with no sidewalks may I add???!), Oregon chose to build walkable cities, greatly expanded our public transit and reduced costs to actually make it usable by Oregonians, corporations have to pay taxes to set up here and know it (no tax payer subsidies to enrich execs), a billionaire tax to put brakes on gross executive pay, a minimum wage that matches the cost of living, non disclosures between municipalities and businesses are illegal, we are focused on a truly green economy (not a "green washed" economy). And fund education in Oregon - seriously? PPB, PCC and PSU are all struggling with funding - but none is sharing how much the administrators make or how many of them there are. The bulk of funding for education should go to EDUCATORS, not administrators.	The governor, the legislature, local governments, employers, big business. The entire education system needs to be rethought "if we want educated Oregonians - yes, I quite understand why politicians and big business may not be on the same page with me but if we want Oregon to thrive, the people of Oregon need to thrive! I would love to see politicians stop thinking in terms of 3 months from now or even 3 years from now. I would love to see Oregon (and its politicians) following the seven generations principle and really planning for the future generations instead of the current how can I profit off of (whatever) today thinking that seems to go into everything our legislature does. And you need to communicate WAY better on your successes and what Oregon's politicians from the Governor to the local municipalities are doing right. I have no idea what our Governor has been up to the last 3 years and very little about our legislature. If you are counting on billionaire owned media (that's another issue that needs to be tackled) to tell the people anything good you've done, you are so naive.	I literally don't know and I feel like I am pretty well informed. It would behoove the State to highlight what programs and policies they have that benefit people so I and others would know what to fight for. PSAs and all that???
Josh von Kuster	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	It is dangerous for me to get to work because bicycle infrastructure and legislation protecting cyclists are lacking.	Reckless operation of a motor vehicle in proximity to cyclists and pedestrians is tantamount to attempted vehicular manslaughter and when it happens where drivers should anticipate cyclist/pedestrian presence (cross walks, bike lanes, designated neighborhood greenways, etc.) should carry significant penalties.	Motorists behind bars for killing cyclists or pedestrians with their vehicle. Reporting "vehicular homicides" rather than "traffic fatalities".	Legislation framing at-fault drivers as criminals when the lethal weapon they are operating endangers, injures, or kills someone.	Mixed-use bike/walk/skate paths are phenomenal. Increased funding for bicycle infrastructure and incentivize municipalities expanding the car-free miles in their jurisdiction.
Gordon Steen	97213	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	K-5 literacy	Edtech	4th graders at Mississippi reading levels	Everyone.	Stand for Children
Joann Noll	97217-4471	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	I am concerned that the Prosperity Council's lacks representation from labor. How can we achieve prosperity when we only focus on the bottom line of the business itself if that prosperity does not reach the workers	More representation of labor organizations.	More workers with full-time employment that can allow them to live without constant economic disruption	add labor representatives to this council.	NA

Karl Fischer	97266	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Chloe Becker	97225	Organization/Business	Portland General Electric	Private	NA	Utility	1000+ people	Tools for growth
Ruth Campbell	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Flindt Windom	97218	Both	Porter W. Yett Co.	Private	NA	Construction	21-100 people	Business climate
NA	97202	Both	Retail store/commercial property owner/multifamily property owner	Private	NA	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Maria Delgado	97030	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
NA	97220	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Jordan DT	97201	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
emily hawley	97034	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Adam H	97214	Both	NA	Private	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Weston Cox	97211	Both	TomorrowLabs	Private	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Reilly Shea	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Karen Darling	97218	Both	Rest and Ritual/Bodies of Water, foundseed	Private	NA	Healthcare, agriculture	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth

Gabriela Oh	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Roberta Wong	97221	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
NA	97302	Both	NA	Non-profit	NA	NA	101-500 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Spencer Thayer	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Sarah Clark	97202	Organization/Business	Oregon Environmental Council	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]
[illegible]									

Steve Uerlings	97333	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Mark Pomeroy	97217	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Carol Raymond	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Deborah Field	97213	Organization/Business	Paperjam Press	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate
john bartley	97062	Both	503bartley.com	Public	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce
NA	97230	Both	NA	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	21-100 people	Tools for growth
Jonna Lynn Bransford	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Elizabeth McPherson	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Ryan Beam	97211	Both	Expanse Massage and Bodywork LLC/ Self	Private	NA	Healthcare	1 - 20 people	Workforce
Christopher Hall	97523	Organization/Business	Water League	Non-profit	NA	Environmental Conservation	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Corinna Kimball-Brown	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Lisa S Parker	97415	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Art Duvall	97016	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Stephanie brown	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Nikki Mandell	97215	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Mark Kille	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Ryan Beam	97211	Both	Expanse Massage and Bodywork LLC	Private	NA	Massage and Bodywork; Non-Profit community organizing	1 - 20 people	Workforce
Judith Kloetzel	97520	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Gail Sabbadini	97703	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
NA	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Bill Harris	97210	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Latiffe Amado	97402	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Heather Ikeler	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Steve Campbell	97439	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Christa Moody	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Mitch Green	97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Karl J. Findling	97703	Both	Oregon Pack Works	Private	Outdoor Gear and Apparel	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Elizabeth Burbach	97224	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Cody Grey	97210	Both	Myself and my bakery	Public	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce
Judith P. Niland	97103	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Ralph Cohen	97219	Both	Ralph M Cohen Consultancy, an engineering consulting sole proprietorship	Private	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Katie Coombes	97206	Organization/Business	RISE Partnership	Non-profit	NA	Healthcare/Long-term Care	101-500 people	Workforce
Kim Stevenson	25420	Organization/Business	Tvavium	Private	Technology	WE are a start-up in Oregon.	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Annette Cornish	97124	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Cliff Lehman	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Bob Andrews	97132	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth

Michael Ulin	97702	Both	Whimsey Inc.	Private	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Oregon's ability to attract startup capital just took a devastating hit. SB 1507 disconnected Oregon from the federal Qualified Small Business Stock (QSBS) exclusion starting in 2026 — right at the moment the federal government expanded QSBS to be the most founder- and investor-friendly it's ever been. [...] The framing of this as a "tax break for millionaires" misses the point entirely — the people most hurt are the founders and early employees building the next generation of Oregon companies, who now have a concrete reason to leave the state or never come here in the first place. At a time when the Prosperity Council is asking how to improve Oregon's business climate, we should be honest: this one bill did more damage to Oregon's startup ecosystem than any single policy in recent memory.	[...] for lost business formation, reduced venture capital deployment, and founder migration out of state — not just the $39M in preserved state revenue.					No	NA	NA
Christina Cook	97116	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The Oregon Climate Protection Program (CPP) is harming businesses and workers in Oregon's natural gas industry by steadily increasing compliance costs on utilities. As those costs rise, companies are forced to cut spending, delay projects, and reduce work that union employees depend on for stable jobs. The program also appears designed to rapidly push electrification without fully considering the impact on existing energy workers and the communities we serve. Policymakers should ensure climate policies reduce emissions while also protecting family-wage jobs and maintaining a reliable, balanced energy system.	The most effective solution would be to repeal the Oregon Climate Protection Program (CPP). The program is increasing costs on natural gas utilities and businesses while putting pressure on family-wage jobs that thousands of Oregon workers rely on. Eliminating the CPP would remove this regulatory burden and allow companies to continue investing in infrastructure, maintaining reliable energy service, and supporting stable employment. Oregon can still pursue emissions reductions through balanced policies that protect workers, businesses, and energy reliability.	Success in the next 2–3 years would mean Oregon has policies in place that protect family-wage energy jobs while still working toward reasonable environmental goals. Repealing the Oregon Climate Protection Program would allow natural gas utilities and related businesses to invest in infrastructure, maintain reliable service, and keep stable employment for workers across the state. It would also create a more balanced energy policy that supports innovation, such as renewable natural gas and hydrogen, without forcing policies that harm existing workers and businesses.	For this to happen, action is needed from state policymakers, regulators or the Governor . The Oregon State Legislature would need to take the lead in repealing or reforming the Oregon Climate Protection Program, while the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality would be responsible for implementing any changes to the program. Employers, labor unions, and industry stakeholders should also be part of the discussion to ensure policies protect jobs, maintain reliable energy service, and support responsible environmental goals.	Programs that support family-wage jobs, workforce development, and energy reliability are the most helpful and should continue. Policies that support apprenticeship and workforce training through programs overseen by the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries help ensure workers can enter and advance in skilled trades with good wages and benefits. Oregon's support for union apprenticeship programs and workforce development partnerships also helps maintain a highly trained workforce that keeps critical energy infrastructure operating safely and reliably. Continuing policies that support infrastructure investment and skilled labor will help sustain stable employment and strong	Minnesota's Natural Gas Innovation Act allows utilities to pilot renewable natural gas, hydrogen blending, and energy efficiency projects while maintaining reliable service. New Hampshire and Ohio have similar programs that let utilities invest in lower-carbon solutions and recover costs, helping customers adopt cleaner energy without sudden price increases. These models reward both utilities and customers for reducing emissions and could serve as examples for Oregon. States like Texas, Pennsylvania, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and West Virginia are frequently cited as places where abundant natural gas, low taxes, and supportive energy policy help keep energy costs low for consumers and	No	NA	NA
Sarah Smith	97222	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Preserving the urban growth boundary, forest land, and agricultural land.	I would maximize the use of existing industrial land, under used malls and retail spaces	No expansion of the urban growth boundary and fewer vacant commercial buildings	Legislature and local governments.	Exclusive farm use laws and the urban growth boundary.	NA	No	NA	NA
Madelyn Elder	97201	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Affordable Housing that can alleviate the Houseless problems all over the state.	1. No tax breaks for developers until AFTER they sell/rent Affordable Housing. Tax breaks should be low enough not to hurt the local or state budgets. 2. No enlarging of the urban development boundaries, unless the developer pays for all infrastructure (utilities, roads, public transit, etc.) and no data farms, or other loud energy-sucking endeavors.	Housing that costs less than half the net median monthly income that is abundant.	Legislature, local governments, developers, etc.	The theoretical program to develop more rehab programs.	Housing before rehab; making rehab a requirement to stay in the housing.	Yes	NA	NA
Paige Richardson	97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Revenue reform. We need a complete overhaul of our tax structure. I spoke with another CEO of an expanding Oregon business whose CFO just advised them to leave the state. This has to stop.	Capital-gains smoothing and reserve rules Create a separate "volatile revenues" definition (e.g., capital gains, stock-option income, very high-income PIT above a threshold) and dedicate a fixed share of that stream to reserves each year (say 50–75% when collections exceed a rolling 5-year average). Hard-wire rules: caps on the reserve balance and clear conditions for when you can draw it down (e.g., when forecasted revenue drops more than a set percentage or unemployment is above a trigger). This reduces boom-and-bust budgets without touching base rates. Broaden modest, more stable bases Consider a narrow, low-rate state "services excise" or "business-to-business" tax carved to spare essential services and low-income households (for example, focused on business-facing services that are currently untaxed and harder to avoid). Or, lean on targeted excises that correlate less with the business cycle (utilities, luxury goods, or high-end real estate transfer surcharges) and earmark a share to general stabilization, not just special funds. Automatically review all federal changes like we did this year. Make business taxes more competitive and predictable Redesign the Corporate Activity Tax	Clear retention of existing businesses. New existing businesses moving to Oregon and new business starts have risen.	The legislature and the Governor with support from local employers, education and training partners. Support from local governments would be a bonus.	NA	"Red carpet" level business recruitment that includes a clear list of incentives; a list of potential locations based on business needs. Overall, we need clearer incentive math up front.	No	NA	NA
Leo Q	97333	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	As a retired public high school science teacher who moved to Corvallis from South Orange Country, California, I am not informed enough to contribute good ideas. I do think that affordable housing is a problem for many low-income members of the workforce here.	An Oregon law restricting rent increases; provide some incentives for builders to build duplexes with affordable rents (and purchases prices) such as the one I live in	More duplexes in Oregon which would provide a near "single family dwelling" living experience for families; relatively stable rents statewide.	I suppose the legislature would be the primary actor.	I think having no sales tax, a "regressive" tax, should continue. Having the major tax being the personal income tax is fine with me.	Apart from warmer ocean water, not many "best practices" in Southern California.	No	NA	NA
Lexie Woodward	97420	Myself	South Coast Development Council	Non-profit	NA	Economic development	1 - 20 people	Business climate	State Measures 5 and 50. Our cities and counties cannot support even basic infrastructure and services on what they're allowed to collect in property tax revenue. Economic development cannot succeed without our cities and counties providing these things. Alternatively or in addition to, income tax could be redistributed to cities and counties like sales tax is where I came here from in Texas. You can't both restrict property taxes while also not giving them income tax revenue. Overregulation for businesses and government entities, permitting takes too long, and the state prioritizes the individual over the business. Businesses cannot afford the losses incurred due to bad employees that win unemployment insurance, or even good ones who get PLO, FMLA, etc. It just comes down to the bottom line, and it encourages and reinforces the behavior from the employees that hurts the business.	NA	NA	NA	NA	.05-2% sales or some other tax dedicated to economic development. I spend tons of my time chasing money instead of doing economic development work. Texas economic development organizations can spend all their time on winning and advancing economic development, to our detriment.	Yes	Tools for growth	NA
Jennifer Niemann	97089	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Actual plans in the forms of things that are proven to move the needle, such as tax reduction for small businesses.	I would also recommend passing legislation to re-criminalize hard drugs, force treatment, and work on revamping Oregon's civil commitment laws, as they are currently a cruel joke on Oregon's populace and have criminalized homelessness. Refocus Oregon agency spending on actual ROI for the taxpayers and end fraud and waste in government spending. If an expense does not support an agency's mission directly, cut it.	Improved business climate in Oregon, some new investment (reversing the current doom loop is a 20+ year job at this point), reduced taxes on citizens, an increase in livability ratings, and an improved national reputation.	Portland City Council needs to focus on Portland is issues-crime, reducing taxes on small businesses that are the lifeblood of the city's culture and former vibe. Work with police instead of against them. Protect Oregon citizens by working with ICE to deport violent alien criminals and clean up Oregon schools as multiple districts have had high level administrators convicted of pedophilia and possession of CSAM in recent months and years. Also bring back phonics and the science of reading and mandate English immersion in all schools ASAP, as bilingual education has never been backed by data. Schools should serve students, not teachers.	AI initiative	1) Get rid of bilingual ed-it doesn't work. 2) Bring back mastery-based curricula and implement phonics and the science of reading ASAP. 3) Retain at 3rd grade for up to two years and treat struggling readers with dyslexia screening and follow up with Barton or Orton-Gillingham treatment by a trained expert. Refusal to do so is a violation of FAPE and consigns minority students to the school-to-prison pipeline (minority students are 75% more likely to be diagnosed with learning differences in prison). 4) Bring back consequences in public schools. Violence will not be tolerated, no matter the "identity" of the perpetrator. 5) Support and FUND vocational education in schools, including JROTC, at parity with more	No	NA	NA
J zekanis	97216	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Education. If our kids are not getting the education and training they need how will they be able to enter an already declining job market? How will they support themselves and their families?	Support education and training for kids and not make cuts in education to accommodate tax cuts for billionaires	Kids who are thriving and excited to learn and be an integral part of what makes Oregon great	D all of the above	NA	NA	No	NA	NA
Francesca Anton	97413	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	In my humble opinion, many Oregonians today do not realize how good they have it living in this state. Our coastline and other beautiful landscapes, our history of avoiding highly toxic industry that makes life in other states so degraded and intolerable. Our great elections system, relatively open government, our ability to grown fantastic fresh food!, and more positives. Especially with the current trashing of the Republican Party (such as it is, especially with ALEC controlling everything they do in this state), we must all be careful to insist that our economic growth be positive for Earth, for the health and safety of Oregonians, and with a mind to sustainability. We have made huge mistakes in the past with unnecessary 'giveaways' to corporations who ended up tricking us by promising jobs and failing to pay their fair share of taxes. No more! We need to get corporate money out of our elections for good before any more 'economic development' plans that will hurt and/or cheat Oregonians as in the past.	See above. Still, I do not mean this as an anti-business statement at all, but our urban areas are filled with box stores and big asphalt jungles that do not bring in income to municipal, county and state government. Bad planning with stores that mostly carry junk people will throw away in a year. This needs to stop. Oregonians must ask themselves, "what do we need here to have a simple, quality life so that others may simply live?", and then we need to make it as much ourselves as we can. We need to get the junk food out of our grocery stores, so that Oregon does not become a food dessert, and we need to design a system of purchasing that does not cause us to increase our waste as our population grows.	Achieving all of the above.	Everyone. We need to get back to thinking of ourselves as a vital part of a social contract and stop letting people divide us. The best reflection of who we are and what we stand for is the way we care for the poorest of us. It is expensive for people to live together in one place, so we need to eliminate the wasteful "conveniences" and make sure, especially children and seniors, enjoy decent health care, housing, and access to healthy food, along with opportunities to give back to our communities.	There are many, we just don't have our priorities in line well enough, and the Republican MO to lower taxes and regulation to benefit the most wealthy is hurting us terribly. No more ALEC! No more PAC's and corporate funding of elections!	See what Claudia Sheinbaum is doing in Mexico that is bring great success lifting Mexicans out of their failed state. We need the same thing here.	No	NA	NA
Patricia Farrell	97132	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Oregon is known for its natural beauty. Not only does our natural capital provide beauty, it provides clean drinking water, carbon sequestration, wildlife habitat, outdoor recreation, and jobs. The biggest challenge ahead is protect our rivers, streams and ocean and save the remaining mature and old growth forests from mining, logging, development and pollution.	I would like to see strong statewide protections for our natural resources, including ample stream/river buffers and an end to logging of our last remaining stands of mature and old growth trees.	Old growth forests linked for habitat connectivity, strong statewide rules for protection of forests and waters. This will lead to increased biodiversity, clean water and air, and make Oregon a better place for all our species. A longer term success metric would also be more wildlife crossings on high impact highways.	I believe in the strength of legislated protections as well as adequate funding from state government. Education and training is also important so that our private lands are managed with conservation in mind. It is also critical to work closely and collaboratively with our Tribal nations.	Oregon's Natural Climate Solutions bill and Natural and Working Lands Fund were both important steps for supporting better forest practices on private lands. The state should invest more in this program. On federal lands (approximately 50% of Oregon's land is managed by the federal government), the Prosperity Council should recommend strong support for current conservation measures, including the Northwest Forest Plan, the Roadless Rule, and protections for mature and old-growth forests on Western Bureau of Land Management Lands. Do not allow our public lands to be privatized, plundered, and liquidate Oregon natural resources is not in line with the values of Oregonians. I was also pleased at the passage of the increase in the Transient Occupancy Tax to fund wildlife habitat improvements.	I think Oregon's land use laws are the best in the country! Keep them strong! We are a model for others.	No	NA	NA
Kyle Shroy	97502	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Cost of Energy is to high. permitting and "green requirements cause more friction and challenges to doing business while being worthless. I don't believe the money is used wisely or for the stated purpose even if they were it would still be a waste and burden to business and growth.	I would cut any reliance on "Renewable" forms of energy like wind\solar while keeping and maintaining hydro and focus on more solid coal\ng\nuclear options.	Reduction in energy cost and associated tax burden to deliver those items.	legislature and local have stop pushing for these terrible energy sources wind\solar.	none.	Texas, Ohio, Pennsylvania, illinois, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, all have a consumer choice model which allows competition and choice.	No	NA	NA
Diane Meisenhelter	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	The best way to strengthen the economy is to raise family incomes (the driving force in our economy) through strong education and training programs, reducing health care costs, ensuring affordable housing especially for lower wage earners, providing good transit, providing universal pre-school and childcare, addressing climate resiliency so that folks don't lose everything including their health and lives, and the like. We do NOT want tax breaks for big businesses and the wealthy. We do not want farm and forest land developed that will be critical for local sustainable food production and sequestration. We do not want job killing data centers that add to surveillance, use up to 1 M gallons of water daily, are energy hogs or create non-clean energy sources as they far outstrip the clean energy goals we are trying to achieve.	Disband this lopsided committee and redirect resources towards basic needs--education, health, affordable housing, childcare, clean energy, sustainable land management practices and local food production, good public transit and more. Stop giving tax breaks to those who need it least but hold us hostage. Stop burgeoning data centers and non-clean energy production.	The state has adopted a "well-being climate justice economy" workplan with stable growth in low-carbon and human services sectors and is moving forward with various aspects of this plan (See Multnomah County's Climate Justice Plan for inklings of what this might look like). Look at donut economics. Plan for long-term basic needs for all instead of short-sighted profits for a few that actually don't "trickle down" to the rest of us.	Have statewide hearings for the public to prioritize their visions for the future and how we want public resources to be spent as the first phase of developing a well-being economy workplan.	Stable cradle to career educational funding, public transit subsidies (not more freeways and mega projects when we aren't caring for our basic infrastructure and maintenance), preschool for all with public subsidies focused for lower wage earners, scarce public funds spent for rent assistance and affordable social housing with needed services especially for lower income and houseless families and individuals (not the current subsidizing of developers of median and higher income housing). Protection of green spaces, sequestration zones, and restoration of damaged ecosystems all of which are critical for our future.	Start looking to Netherlands, Costa Rica, and other countries as well. Yes there are some policies and projects to emulate in recent NYC, Minneapolis, Seattle, California,etc. but one has to cast a broad net for best practices in each of the areas listed above.	Yes	Tools for growth	NA
Michael Flaming	97394	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Raising taxes only detors business and slows growth	Tax relief for middle class. Incentives for small businesses	Balenced legislater	Everyone	NA	Follow Texas and Florida	Yes	Tools for growth	NA
NA	97330	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Employers, through strict policies and regulations, are treated as bad-guys. There is no partnership, only rules to punish assuming we're all out to treat employees badly. More taxes, more fees and we get less out of our government. Stop spending Salem and start helping business grow and flourish before more businesses leave our state. Support childcare subsidies for working families and for the organizations doing the work, and invest in our healthcare system while getting insurance companies out of everyone's pockets please	look at polices in place that drive up business expense, and please monitor all the unemployment processes - there are many people gaming this system, applying for jobs, not showing up for the interview, or ghosting when offered a position. And the continual increase in min. wage every year only drives up all our costs. We pass that on through our service fees because we must. I think Oregon D lawmakers have no idea what it takes to run a business and keep it solvent, and I vote D	businesses staying in Oregon, skilled workforce that is literate and can do math, thriving communities that can fund services on businesses via taxes and not fees on water bills	Legisature, stop adding more laws and look at rolling some back. Look at our tax structure, cut spending. Schools need to be held accountable for results. Require standards and consistency in schools, require all students be tested to determine their literacy, we are passing students through to meet a graduation goal this has no rigor behind it. Direct more funding to community colleges to strengthen tech ed programs. Those will stay viable as AI changes everything else. Consolidate our University system, too many, Universities spreading out to other cities across oregon, it's become highly inefficient to maintain.	The Youth Development Division and investing in communities and youth, HECC, also investing in job skills programs	Oregon has a spending problem and is hostile to business - that's the crux of it from my view. Does our Elected leadership have the courage to get unions out of the power seat of our state - their policies are bankrupting our businesses and our state.	Yes	Workforce	NA
Michael Ninen	97212	Organization/Business	Greater Portland Inc	Non-profit	NA	Economic Development	1 - 20 people	Business climate	• Issue an immediate moratorium on the Climate Protection Plan (CPP) and pivot to the "Invest" model. • Ensure Governor attendance at global recruitment and SelectUSA conferences to attract international investment. • Reconnect to federal Section 168(k) depreciation rules effective for the 2026 tax year to remove the "Investment Penalty". • Create tax predictability to ensure the state remains a jurisdiction of choice rather than a jurisdiction of last resort. • Complete a total rebalance of personal income tax rates to remain below 7.75% before the 2039 fiscal cliff. • Evaluate the implementation of a raw consumption tax to create a stable and competitive long-term fiscal landscape.	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Yes	Workforce	NA

Susan Andrews	97229	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Smart planning for current industrial and urban zoned areas to preserve our valuable rural, forest, farm and wildlife resources. Assumption that high tech growth has to be concentrated in one area, or that it is the best sector to pursue business growth	If we plan how to most effectively use our land that is currently zoned for industrial uses, for example identifying types of high value industry that creates jobs and tax revenue, and turning down business uses like data centers that don't pay back in the long run, it will remove the constant push to develop rural lands that are supposed to be preserved.	a diversity of businesses would be developing across our state, providing jobs across a broader sector of the state, a variety of jobs rather than just technical engineering, and hopefully growth in some industries that are not as dependent on huge quantities of water and electricity.	The legislature needs to stop considering bills to convert farmland into industrial land use. We have plenty of industrial land and it was planned in a way that spread out the opportunities beyond Washington County only. Local governments need to stop allowing data centers to consume all their industrial land allotments and seek out better job creating, resource preserving industry uses for their sites. OSU and OSHU could expand biotech education programs, we could grow drug manufacturing. We could be looking to attract aerospace, automotive and other sectors of industry instead of concentrating on computers/high tech.
Anita Andazola	87404	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Ill informed business, especially those coming from other states, that make significant decisions and real estate purchases without knowledge of and respect for state and local land use laws.	Up front information and potential alternatives to all incoming and existing business. Heavy fines for the "act first, beg forgiveness later crowd. Oregon must remain true to its progressive roots.	Well thought out, sustainable business models respectful of the progressive culture of the state.	The legislature, the Secretary of State, Department of State Lands and DLCD, strong incentives for new business models, progressive training and education for working class and students, retraining for older workers, realistic funding for ODFW and State water resources.
Chris Workman	97370	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	With a corporate tax rate of 7.6% and a top individual income tax rate of 9.9%, businesses and employees alike feel the pinch. The hefty gasoline tax of 58.40 cents per gallon also hurts.	Lower the corporate tax rate and income tax rates across the board.	businesses stop leaving the state for less expensive states.	state legislature, led by the governor's call to lower taxes throughout the state.
Margaret Butler	97213	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	inequality: For business to thrive, customers need to be economically stable. Environmental Protection: We are at the point of no-return in terms of our warming world. There is no profit on a dead planet.	policies that raise wages at the bottom (increase in the minimum wage). Increased spending on services to help people get out of homelessness, including treatment, housing and other services. Preschool for all also provides support for low income parents, as well as raising standards for childcare workers, who do the most important work for very little. We need to reject proposals to increase logging on BLM land and we need to support and care for our forests by instituting permanent protections for mature and old-growth forests on federal and state lands; We also need to develop strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the logging and wood products industry in Oregon (the state's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions);	A more stable community with thriving small businesses More stable wild lands throughout Oregon	Legislature and citizens
William F Nelson	97756	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Roger Sabbadini	97703	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	protect public lands	protect old grow forests by restricting harvest rotations to longer ones, establish 21 inch rule (e.g., East Side Screen) applied state wide, restrict thinning and prescribed burns, no clearcutting on public lands	support Roadless Rule Conservation Act, stop wood biomass plant development, establish 21 inch rule, ensure compliance and enforcement	Oregon Department of Forestry. Enforcement and compliance
Ron Kutch	97420	Both	West Coast Contractors	Private	NA	Construction	21-100 people	Business climate	Over-regulation and mismatched regulations	1. Put the Regional Solutions efforts back to what they were intended to do - reduce barriers to economic development. 2. Align state agencies to reduce the time and paperwork required to get s...tuff done. 3. LISTEN to the business sector. We know what needs to happen to get Oregon out of the Doom Loop. LISTEN to what we have to say. 4. PARTNER with business to make Oregon a great place to live, work and play again. 5. Get out of the way of building Workforce Housing. If we are going to prosper, we need places for our workforce to live. This may well require taking on the Labor Unions. 6. DIRECT the Majority Party to get out of the way of sensible progress. The "We are the Government and are here to help" attitude must go.	1. Reduced permitting time and hurdles to getting development done. 2. Democrats WORKING with Republicans to break the stalemate and getting s....tuff done. 3. 100,000 new housing units in 3 years, the majority Workforce Housing. 4. Labor Unions no longer running every sector of development when they are creating hurdles	1. Governor Kotek MUST take the lead to work with Business and keep the Legislature driving toward common sense solutions. 2. Legislature MUST stop the infighting (on BOTH sides) and Get S....tuff Done. They MUST understand that onerous taxes will drive business and revenues away from Oregon. 3. Regulatory Agencies MUST come together and Get S....tuff Done. Oregon is the MOST REGULATED STATE IN THE UNION. Agencies contradict each other and work in silos. This has to stop.
Susan Sokol Blosser	97114	Organization/Business	Sokol Blosser Winery	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	21-100 people	Tools for growth	Excess traffic impedes tourism as well as employees ingress and egress. The first leg of the Dundee Bypass has shifted traffic west of Dundee with major impact on wineries and their visitors	Do the third leg of the Dundee Bypass	It will take more than 2-3 years but the result will be improved traffic flow and encourage more local tourism	The planning has taken place and the route established. Just waiting for funding, which will take multiple sources working together
Tracey Rainey Smith	97267-1214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Funding in education	Increase funding to school districts	A school, stocked with professionals (certified and classified). Enough, being paid a living wage, to support ALL students in that school. Able to address all student needs successfully not just putting out fires. And students thriving.	State legislature, school districts, education & training partners.
Andrew Simrin	97404	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Oregon's economy depends on a healthy environment. Our forests, rivers, and other incredible natural resources support an outdoor recreation industry worth $16 billion in annual consumer spending and approximately 192,000 full- and part-time jobs. However, development, logging, mining, climate change, and biodiversity loss threaten this economy. The Prosperity Council should recommend the strongest possible protections for Oregon's public lands, and should include recommendations for investing in natural climate solutions, such as protections for our mature and old-growth forests. The Trump administration's efforts to privatize and liquidate natural resources from public lands represent one of the greatest threats we've had to contend with in decades. The Prosperity Council should recommend strong opposition to these attacks	Permanent protections for mature and old growth forests on federal and state lands;	Protected drinking watersheds, end to logging of mature and old growth forests on federal lands, on track to protect an additional 10% of lands and water in 10 years, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions from the logging industry.	The Governor's office and state legislature should lead in developing new policies to protect Oregon's public lands and forests, and should call on Oregon's congressional delegation to do the same.
Bob Rossi	97301	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Whose prosperity are we really talking about? Why isn't there a school-to-union job pipeline? What are the ways forward for prevailing wage agreements and project labor agreements in the public and private sectors that don't have no-strike clauses? How can we rein in AI?	Legislation restricting AI, a union role in education in the schools (especially in trades and computer learning), changing the state constitution to allow for or require prevailing wage agreements and project labor agreements with the right to strike in the public and private sectors.	Draft legislation and goals set in all of these areas, plans for pilot programs in the schools, regional hearings on AI.	Legislators, Labor, education/training partners. We need to limit or close the role of out-of-state actors in determining our future.
Mike Beilstein	97330	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Housing availability and affordability	Investment in public housing/social housing. We need to separate housing from the market economy. The inflation of housing costs/rents is far outstripping gains in wages.	Housing costs/rents stabilize or fall relative to wages	Both the state and local governments need to invest in rent controlled living spaces.
Patrick OHerron	97217	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The state needs to prioritize essential services like healthcare, housing, and education. Rich people need to pay their taxes and stop complaining.	Do not give a Texas billionaire $300 million for the MODA center. Fully support preschool for all.	No new data centers. Getting rid of existing data centers. No hospitals closing, fewer people living on the streets.	Legislature and local governments, primarily
Kristen Malone	97213	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	I would like free, high quality public education in Oregon. I want families to feel incentivized to send kids to public schools. Cost of living is increasing every year. We need to make Oregon a leader in childhood education. I want Oregon to expand preschool for all beyond multnomah county. Education is a social good for society. It allows parents to work, employers to have an educated and skilled labor force.	Keep preschool for all and expand it to other counties in Oregon	Preschool for all is fully ramped up in multnomah county. Preschool for all has begun expanding to other counties in Oregon. More families move to Oregon	Legislature and local governments
Laura Cheshire	97338	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Affordability in how it relates to workers at all levels.	Reduce taxes for those making $50,000 yearly or less. Enhance day care access and quality at reasonable fees. Ensure safety for all legal immigrants.	Less food insecurity, parents more easily working full time jobs for better pay, and less anxiety and fear in the immigrant and immigrant adjacent families.	Federal and state legislatures, employers and community members.
Spa La	97209	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	The investment in big business has always been a wrong quick fix in Oregon (think: Hyundai, data centers, Sony), where it is proven, as in most states, that small business is what keeps the economy afloat.	Investment more in entrepreneurs, small business, training people in tech, and establishing vocational training programs and apprenticeships in high school. We are losing electricians, shoe repair, plumbers, nurses, and the opportunity to train cooks, chefs, data analysts and other trades early, in high school. Give students a chance to explore early and develop mentorship relationships with adults, not just have presentations in high school classes.	Apprentice programs in the trades and other vocations in at least some of the larger high schools. Examining where nursing training programs have been cut, and making sure they are funded. Tax breaks not for the massive industries that tend to employ few and have ties to the community that are minimal, but instead giving grants to small businesses.	Yes. All of those ("legislature, local governments, employers, education/training partners, etc."). It's a coordinated effort. And taxes. But also, even though it is a federal entity, the people who work for SBA are local and grounded in their communities. They would be good resources for interviewing to find out what's needed.
John Pascone	97321-2227	Both	LINN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GROUP	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Economic Development - all industries	1 - 20 people	Business climate	land use restrictions, wetland costs and barriers, regulations	change land use laws, expand wetland banks to lower the cost, ease or eliminate regulations on business operations	more land for business expansion and for housing more affordable and available wetland credits regulators that help businesses not punish them	the Governor and her department heads
Lynn Smith	97040	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	K-12 reading programs	Ensure that K-12 and specifically K-5 teachers are adequately trained to teach reading. Currently, they are not and students are unprepared to advance to middle and high school. [illegible]	Improved reading scores for k-12 students.	Legislature: require teachers to pass reading instructions standards that exist in other states (eg, CA)
Donna Grubbs	97058	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The data center in The Dalles, increase in utility costs, tax breaks given to businesses while driving residential costs higher. Attempts to purchase more water by data centers, our local farmers fretting about corps. These crops drive our tourism and our culture as rural communities.	The data center pays their fair share, the company environmental statements become transparent so citizens are assured pollution is at a minimum. Proof that water warming issues are not harming salmon and other aquatic species.	An open agreement brought before city Council and agreed upon by residents by vote.	Local government, perhaps state regarding pollution and water warming issues.
Otis Goad	97434	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Why bother, when every company is working hard to replace workers with AI? Government is paving the way for my replacement and has no desire to serve the public. Not in any effective way. My employer is having me train my AI replacement as I type this.	Replace ALL positions in Oregon government with less corrupt fools. Staff the positions with working class people that will make good choices. Stop all the corruption. Stop all the wasteful spending. Stop allowing out of state groups from using our state as a test bed for failed policy. Stop with nepotistic appointments. Stop favoring Walmart's interests over the people's interest - for example. I am a successful person. If Oregon government took its boot off my neck, I would excel. As it is now, I am staying afloat but the boot is pressing down more and more every day. You will dismiss this and all my other points.	If I am still employable as an engineer with 20 years experience in industry. Success would be: implementing protections for the workers incentives to hire humans reduce tax burden on working people Stop trying to make positions for family members within government. Stop favoring massive corporations over living breathing people. Stop trying to prevent small business ventures. Success would be me living without the boot of oppression on my neck.	The government is feverishly pushing for AI to replace the workers. The government IS the problem and cannot be expected to help the worker. The government works for money, and I have none. So it does not work for me and never has in my lifetime. The only way the people will get what is deserved, is if we all collectively stand up and react. Tar and feather political leaders and worse to business leaders that are anti worker and anti-American. Kotek will not do anything beneficial for real living Oregonians. She has not yet, why start now? I am not sure why bother asking now since she has not cared what we need and want so far. You do not care about the citizens, only monied interests. I have no money left to be interesting.
Mark Moisan	97115	Both	Small inn (lodging) in Dundee	Private	NA	Hospitality	1 - 20 people	Business climate	The ongoing structural deficits at nearly every level of government is maddening. The ghosts of measure 50 need to be tackled head on. Too much money in some areas and not enough in others, and impossible to re-balance because of how we've tinkered with the system.	Nix measure 50 and related measures, as well as the Corporate Activity tax, and propose a rational revenue strategy that is predictable, sustainable, and ATTRACTS businesses instead of scaring them to other states.	(1) Stable funding source for school, roads; (2) no odd, poorly managed tax buckets like Portland's arts tax, dozens of local levies; (3) A larger percentage of dollars in the general fund; (4) Schools funded MORE from local taxes instead of inadequate state funding algorithms	Requires legislative action. With the right thinkers, might be able to win bipartisan support by nixing Measure 50, etc., while also nixing the Corporate Activity Tax, etc.
Anne Simpson Wagner	97230-8610	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	I'm having a bit of difficulty integrating the fact that we're only talking business/economy here. I suppose I am not sufficiently aware of the Purpose Statement of the Prosperity Council. Having that as part of the intro. to this survey might have been helpful because, in addition to tools for business and economic growth, which I do plan to say a little about, I was hoping to be able to address: - increasing housing availability, - asking the State Legislature to reconsider the "Kicker" which is, frankly, an assinine and antique piece of legislation, and - creating plans for gov't accountability which stops millions of $$ from being "misplaced and unspent." Those three things are high on my recommendations, also.	I don't know if this is a change, but I would like to know that, when we are "incentivizing big businesses", we also have asking for clear statements of support of Oregon values. I want to know that companies are laying out their plans for benefitting All of our citizens, not just the wealthy, and not only through their taxes paid in their Raison D'Etre. I would like small creative businesses to have some particular avenues of support. One of the things that Portland and every small town benefit from in their quality of life is small, creative businesses who make them feel like this is not just a community of big box and big business success - feel like this is a home they want to live in.	I live on East side, so for me it would look like reasonably-paved main thoroughfares and safe infrastructure, big & small businesses opening, more people walking the streets in the main and mini-downtowns, more people using public transportation again, ... and a sprinkling of those exciting things opening like the James Beard Market! It would look like more reasonably priced housing coming on the market, more support helping people on the streets get themselves off the streets, more addictive services to support that movement back into housing.... I don't know. This is more than 2-3 years.	Yes. All listed, and some people may have more ideas
Heather Avilla	97015	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Cost of living is outrageous and employers refuse to meet the need by raising wages	Restrict rent costs, utilities, gas, food price gouging or raise the wages to meet the cost of living. Restriction CEO pay to a small percentage, and Tax the Rich appropriately!!! We also need MCR for all, free preschool/childcare, more mental healthcare options, access to union tradeschools, restrict the cost of college or make it free again	More people housed and fed and insured, etc.	Local government because the federal government is Not on our side
John	97850	Organization/Business	City of La Grande Oregon	Public	Business and Professional Services	Government	1000+ people	Tools for growth	A key challenge for communities like La Grande is the growing disconnect between the cost of maintaining essential public services and infrastructure, and the limited tools available to generate sustainable, locally responsive revenue. Cities are being asked to support housing growth, economic development, and infrastructure expansion, but the funding mechanisms available, particularly for smaller and rural communities, do not scale with those expectations. This has created a structural imbalance over time, where communities must either defer investment, draw down reserves, or consider service reductions. For La Grande, and similar communities, the core challenge is bringing revenues, services, and infrastructure into alignment in a way that supports responsible growth without compromising long-term sustainability. The biggest barrier is the lack of flexible, locally adaptable funding and financing tools that allow communities to respond to their unique conditions. Current constraints include: Limited authority to implement or adjust local revenue mechanisms in a timely and proportional way; Heavy reliance on traditional funding sources that do not keep pace with rising costs; Regulatory and structural barriers that make it difficult to connect growth directly to the infrastructure and service capacity required to support it; A gap between state-level expectations (housing, growth, infrastructure delivery) and the local tools available to implement them. Additionally, smaller communities often lack the capacity to fully leverage complex funding programs or navigate layered regulatory requirements, which further limits their ability to act proactively. Addressing these challenges requires a framework that expands local flexibility, aligns incentives between growth and infrastructure investment, and supports communities in building long-term financial sustainability rather than relying on short-term solutions.	I would recommend expanding local authority and flexibility for cities to implement scalable, locally tailored revenue and financing tools that directly align growth with infrastructure and service capacity. Specifically: Authorize more flexible local revenue options (such as user-based fees, utility-style service models, and locally calibrated funding mechanisms) that can be adjusted to reflect actual system use and community conditions; Streamline pathways for communities to connect growth to infrastructure investment, allowing cities to ensure that new development contributes proportionally to the systems it relies on; Modernize and expand tools like urban renewal, service districts, and infrastructure financing programs to better support smaller and rural communities; Reduce administrative and regulatory barriers that limit timely local decision-making, while maintaining appropriate accountability and transparency; Provide technical and implementation support to help smaller communities effectively deploy these tools. At a broader level, the solution is to create a system where communities are empowered to bring revenues, services, and infrastructure into alignment, rather than being [illegible]	Success in 2–3 years would mean communities like La Grande are no longer reacting to financial pressure, but are proactively managing growth, infrastructure, and service delivery through aligned and sustainable systems. Specifically, success would look like: Improved alignment between revenues, services, and infrastructure, with communities able to maintain service levels without relying on reserves or deferring critical maintenance; Implementation of locally tailored funding tools that reflect actual system use and support long-term sustainability; clear, transparent performance measures that allow both elected officials and the public to understand the condition of services and infrastructure in real time; stronger connection between growth and infrastructure capacity, ensuring that development contributes to the systems it depends on; reduced reliance on short-term or reactive solutions, replaced by phased, strategic decision-making frameworks. At a broader level, success would mean communities have the tools, flexibility, and capacity to make informed decisions that protect service reliability while supporting responsible economic growth.	Achieving this outcome will require coordinated action across multiple levels, with the State playing a key enabling role and local governments leading implementation. State Legislature and State Agencies – Must expand and modernize the tools available to local governments by increasing flexibility in revenue options, reducing regulatory barriers, and aligning statewide expectations (such as housing and infrastructure goals) with practical implementation authority at the local level. Local Governments – Must lead in applying these tools responsibly by engaging their communities, aligning resources with priorities, and implementing transparent, performance-based decision-making frameworks. Regional and Economic Development Partners, play a role in supporting growth strategies that are aligned with infrastructure capacity and long-term community sustainability. Private Sector and Development Community, must be engaged as partners in ensuring that growth contributes proportionally to the infrastructure and services it relies on. Community Members, are essential participants in shaping priorities, understanding tradeoffs, and supporting long-term solutions that [illegible]
Richard Wagner	98257-1195	Both	Water Wise LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	Consulting for water conservation with Enterprise size commercial irrigation systems	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Reliable / stable public funding for infrastructure improvements. School districts, parks departments and similar public institutions need a stable economy to derive a reliable tax base from. That tax base coupled with reasonable regulations on water resources drive demand and ability to pay for, my firm's expertise which helps these agencies incorporate technology and be good steward's of water resources. The future of our nation is making state and local economies shaky enough that investment in my services is put on the shelf.	Clear / forward thinking legislation that provides reasonable safeguards and cost on use of available water sources in light of climate change and increase of population. Continuing or enacting water rebate programs for efficient irrigation.	Appropriate / consistent tiered water rates. Rebate plans which are easy to understand and apply for. Efficient and consistent enforcement / evaluation / monitoring of systems once installed.	Improved monitoring and reporting to determine if installations are operated and maintained in a manner such that water stewardship benefit is achieved. The sticking point is not make it so onerous that it becomes a part of the affordability problem. Governmental regulation has driven affordability costs too high. Finding balance difficult. I don't envy you this job. Thanks for trying. Also public education and professional education such that landscape architects / A&E professionals / site managers see the value in water conservation.
Peg williams	97830	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The governor	New governor	New Governor who doesn't buy waterfalls	The people
Anne Trudeau	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Deregulation is not a tool for growth. It is a tool for environmental destruction. Incentives are not a tool for growth. They are tax breaks for the rich that gut programs for the rest of us. Since the 1980's, the dominant economic narrative has been that if we cut taxes on the rich and corporations, they will invest in our state and prosperity will follow. But the reality is that trickle-down economics has led to vast inequality and widespread economic insecurity.	In March 2026 the Oregon Legislature passed SB 1507A—a bill that will limit the tax giveaways to corporations created by Congress in 2025. We need more legislation like this, not less.	Taxing billionaires so that we can fully funding health care and education (from pre-school through college). No food insecurity in Oregon. Increased funding of free education including skilled trades apprenticeships and other Increased regulation of polluting businesses. Guaranteed living wage for ALL workers. Guaranteed income for everyone.	All of the above.
Timothy Murphy	97132	Organization/Business	Dental equipment, furniture, components manufacturer	Private	Metals and Machinery	Engineering Design, Assembly, Testing, Shipping	101-500 people	Business climate	We need to stop thinking of more ways to tax businesses. Oregon needs to consider more ways to provide meaningful incentives to stay and grow business in Oregon beyond 2-3 year tax relief efforts on business growth.	Stop trying to further tax businesses. Provide meaningful economic development incentives that compare to some of the most aggressive states trying to recruit business (Carolinas, Tennessee, Florida, etc.)	Healthy growing business that is supported by state and local policy. Stop treating capitalism as an enemy. Be more customer service oriented.	legislature and local governments
Roger Kofler	97267	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	I am against compromising our environmental and climate change regulations in order to attract businesses to Oregon	NA	NA	NA
Keith Moree	97217	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Fixing the state's public K-12 education system	Implementing consistent statewide standards for reading education based on outcomes. This should be done via a Marshall Plan type commission that includes all stakeholders. Local input is important, but should not be an excuse for consistently poor outcomes. Standards should reflect global norms for advanced industrial societies.	Improving math and reading outcomes at all levels of the educational system.	All levels of government need to work together to make this happen. Cannot be dictated from top down, or bottom up. Must be a broad public initiative, with strong public relations and community education components.
Bernadette Rodgers	97239-2053	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	wellbeing of employees-- living wages, accessible education, universal healthcare, preschool for all, affordable housing, healthy environment-- these are the issues that Oregon should focus on, and these are the things that will draw a quality workforce to Oregon.	Universal healthcare and pre-K alone would make huge strides in improving quality of life for present and future generations. Greater taxation on the very wealthy and wealthy corporations is needed to fund the societal improvements we need, and reduce wealth inequality. We need wealth redistribution!	Universal healthcare, accessible higher ed, higher high school graduation rates, pre-K for all, less poverty and homelessness-- healthy children, healthy ecosystems, healthy food, happy people!	Everyone! But the legislature and local governments have the biggest role to play to align taxation and spending with the right priorities, to incentivize healthy growth and discourage (or outlaw) harmful business behavior.
Sarah Marble	97210	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Providing more transportation options for the workforce	Expand bus and train service and bike and walking routes	People would be able to get to work, school, medical care, errands without having to have a car	Legislature and local governments
Natalie Legras	97213	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	1. Transportation: it's too hard to get to businesses (employees and customer) and cars are not the best solution.	Make it safe and quick to get to work and businesses. Create an environment where parents don't need to chauffeur kids around 24/7 so they can go to a happy hour sometimes and spend money.	Transit, biking, or walking should take me to 90% of the places I need to go within 30 minutes—including to work.	Governor and legislature need to stop failing to fund transit/transportation over and over.
Barton Van Syoc	97527	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Natural gas futures	Open the door to growth and expansion.	Reduced restrictions for developing infrastructure. Greater opportunities for exporting	Everyone!
Craig Edwards	97003	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	We need lower taxes and less budget spending.	Please live and work within your budget. Trim programs and costs. DO NOT spend more than the state takes in. Stop spending oyr money on Illegal immigrants	No illegal immigrants living in Oregon.	State, local and county.
Eva M. Arechiga de Valverde	97071	Organization/Business	Valgreen Painting, LLC.	Private	Business and Professional Services	Construction (NAICS 238320)	1 - 20 people	Business climate	One of the biggest challenges I would like the Prosperity Council to address is the administrative and compliance burden placed on small subcontractors working on public projects. While programs intended to promote inclusion (such as COBID certification and public contracting opportunities) are valuable, and the online application process is generally clear and accessible, there is an opportunity to improve the evaluation process. At times, variations in experience and familiarity among Certification Specialists with the realities of small, disadvantaged, and minority-owned businesses can lead to misunderstandings, which may unintentionally complicate the process and create a less supportive experience than intended.	I would recommend implementing greater standardization and consistency in the certification evaluation process, including clear guidelines and criteria applied uniformly across all Certification Specialists. Additionally, providing ongoing training focused on understanding small, disadvantaged, and minority-owned businesses would help ensure a more consistent, fair, and supportive evaluation experience.	Applicants would experience clear communication, standardized evaluations, and reduced duplication, allowing them to focus more on growing their businesses rather than managing administrative complexity.	This would require action from state agencies and local governments.
Michaela McCormick	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	A well trained and well paid work force.	Universal, free, high-quality preschool is an economic silver bullet — it delivers a 3-to-1 return on investment and raises family incomes by about 22% on average.	State and local funding for free universal preschool.	State legislature, local governments, colleges and universities.
Thor Hinckley	97215-4180	Both	Third Act Oregon	Non-profit	NA	NA	500-1000 people	Business climate	We would like to see the Council address the potential business opportunities arising from climate change, across the various business sectors currently operating in Oregon	To forward cast to a changed climate in Oregon and the business opportunities that arise from those climate changes (i.e. hotter and dryer conditions in Summer and wetter in the winter and spring)	A realignment of government support for the emergence of businesses in Oregon that help local economies adapt to the new opportunites arising due to climate change.	A revisioning of the business planning landscape to include the impacts arising from a changing climate which will significantly impact, agriculture, tourism and land management.

Dale Depweg, PhD.	97128	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Affordable & viable post secondary education programs to allow & encourage/reward our youth to Stay, Prosper, and Contribute to Oregon's economy, and highly valued social & environmental quality of life & community!	Keep and expand the high quality and varied educational doors of opportunity & growth. This Must include well coordinated relationships, training and internships with Oregon industries an business so that skills taught are of those with a viable and productive future- good for our youth, our businesses, industries, and innovation.	NA	All of the above!	Affordable and high quality public schools, trade schools & internships, Community Colleges, & state universities and colleges. Also, an expanded focus on international relationships/ education-- beginning with languages and exchange programs!
Leeor Schweitzer	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The biggest barrier is wealth inequality. Wealth inequality leads to unaffordable living costs, which means people have less disposable income to spend at businesses.	I'd like to see recommendations that better reallocate money from rich people to services for the greater public.	smaller wealth gap, more people who can afford their daily costs	state and local governments can both look to ways to reallocate money from rich people towards public services	Preschool for All, libraries, K-12 education, public transportation, tenants rights, public parks, so many more
Lauren Anderson	97211	Organization/Business	Oregon Wild	Non-profit	Forestry and Wood Products	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Oregon's economy depends on a healthy environment. Our forests, rivers, and other incredible natural resources support an outdoor recreation industry worth $16 billion in annual consumer spending and approximately 192,000 full- and part-time jobs. However, development, logging, mining, climate change, and biodiversity loss threaten this economy. The Prosperity Council should recommend the strongest possible protections for Oregon's public lands, and should include recommendations for investing in natural climate solutions, such as protections for our mature and old-growth forests. The Trump administration's efforts to privatize and liquidate natural resources from public lands represent one of the greatest threats we've had to contend with in decades. The Prosperity Council should recommend strong opposition to these attacks.	Permanent protections for mature and old-growth forests on federal and state lands; Strategies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the logging and wood products industry in Oregon (the state's largest source of greenhouse gas emissions); Protection of drinking watersheds on public lands; Equity and justice considerations; Prioritization of Tribal consultation; Quantitative statewide targets and conservation plans; Establishment and investment in conservation funds; Tax incentives for additional conservation measures; Tax incentives and grants for natural carbon sequestration (including incentives for longer logging rotations for private forest owners); Establishing new state parks and conservation lands; and Investment in wildlife corridors and	Protected drinking watersheds, no more logging of mature and old growth forests on federal lands, on track to protect an additional 10% of lands and water in 10 years, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions from the logging industry.	The Governor's office and state legislature should lead in developing new policies to protect Oregon's public lands and forests, and should call on Oregon's congressional delegation to do the same.	Oregon's Natural Climate Solutions bill and Natural and Working Lands Fund were both important forest steps for supporting better practices on private lands. The state should invest more in this program. On federal lands (approximately 50% of Oregon's land is managed by the federal government), the Prosperity Council should recommend strong support for current conservation measures, including the Northwest Forest Plan, the Roadless Rule, and protections for mature and old-growth forests on Western Bureau of Land Management Lands. The Trump administration's efforts to privatize public lands and liquidate Oregon natural resources is not in line with the values of Oregonians.
Pamela	97459	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	#3 and #4 of the strategic goals for Oregon's economy are key to economic development. The focus should be there. Infrastructure needs to be improved specially in the rural areas in order to promote sustainable growth. And Modernizing our economic development tools will allow us to garner a larger share of the resources so desperately needed in our rural areas.	I would include people from the rural areas to part of the planning and execution phases of the Governor's plan. If our rural communities aren't represented appropriately, how will anyone be able to create a plan including our needs? We need to have a seat at the table.	Our rural communities would have the access, funding, and exposure to the same considerations as those communities along the I-5 corridor. This will afford those communities to grow and maintain their populations, reducing the overpopulated "major cities" which would be critical for ongoing rural community success. If we can't sustain the businesses within the communities, the young adults will leave to find their success elsewhere. Success for rural communities would see population increases (instead of brain drains) to take advantage of business opportunities closer to their homes and families. This would perpetuate ongoing growth and prosperity to current and future generations and the ability to increase capacity for everything needed to stay	We need to have bipartisan, forward thinking participation on all levels of structure: government, business, education, and community leadership to be boots on the ground.	Local economic development organizations need to be a hub/resource for all communities. One place for businesses, developers, educators, to get the information and direction needed for success in business, education, jobs, and housing for their communities. Funding these organizations to provide information that can be disseminated to those who need it most. Saving those organizations from having to reinvent the wheel each time.
Emily Krafft	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	I'd like the prosperity council to look at how we can boost earnings and provide more opportunities for women in the local workforce. One big barrier is the availability and cost of childcare. Another is the fact that sectors where predominantly women work, like caregiving professions, tend to be lower paid	Expanding options for day care and preschool, and making it free, can make a huge difference for families. Women often are the default caregivers, and when there are free childcare options available, that opens up a lot more options for job opportunities and career advancement. Programs that boost wages for lower-paid jobs can also make a big difference and I'd like to see more government action to support this - for example, the mimimum wage requirements set in PCEF and Preschool For All. In addition to workforce benefits, programs like these can have broad impacts on supporting the local economy and growing new businesses.	Free preschool and daycare programs widely available for Oregon families without waiting lists and lotteries. Increased wages in women-dominated fields.	Multnomah County has taken the lead on Preschool for All. State-level partnership and support - or at least the state getting out of the way instead of creating more obstacles - would help make this groundbreaking program a success. It would great for the legislature to consider options for creating a similar program statewide that meets the needs of all Oregon families. More broadly, I'd like to see research on the impacts of Preschool for All and PCEF on the local economy and workforce development to inform the creation of innovative new local and state-level economic development programs	OR Dept of early learning and care programs.
Alicia John	97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	X	X	X	X	X
Anna Chittum	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	fees and taxes for programs that are not providing the benefit taxpayers and ratepayers expect them to	Move to a whole market-based system for carbon trading, so we can actually benefit from carbon markets in CA and WA, not the Climate Protection Program which isn't actually funding CO2 reductions on a 1:1 basis; also, figure out K-12 funding so that we actually see true improvements in the # of days and hours our kids spend in school	Oregon adopts a cap and trade system that can trade with other states; Oregon adopts an educational funding framework that is durable and sustainable	State legislature and public school districts; state agencies	NA
NA	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Make it easier and faster to build infrastructure of any kind in this state. Land use and environmental regulations make shovel-ready land near impossible.	streamline the regulations and keep an inventory of shovel ready sites for companies to build and not face DECADES of delays in the permitting process	Companies are interested and able to build here	Legislature, local governments	none
Dresden Albrecht	97030	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Providing housing for disadvantaged people. A stable foundation of basic needs, including housing (as well as food and support services), will help people be in better position for training and pursuit of skilled labor.	Increase accessibility and funding for housing programs like like housing choice vouchers and affordable communities. Achieve this through scaled income tax, leisure taxes (like cannabis and alcohol), and business taxes.	Expansion of programs. Streamlining on application processes. I don't expect things to be fully implemented by this time. Perhaps we are having them put to a vote by then.	Mostly the legislature and local government. Also, if we want it to pass, community activists and supportive services.	Housing choice voucher. Vocational rehab. OHP. Actually, I'm not sure which of these are state level, necessarily.
Albert LePage	97405	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The central challenge is that Oregon's business climate still treats prosperity too narrowly as growth and revenue, leading to regulatory, tax, and permitting systems that don't reliably support long-term human and ecological flourishing. These systems are often complex, fragmented, and unpredictable for employers while also not consistently delivering strong outcomes in health, equity, environmental sustainability, or community well-being.	I would explicitly reframe Oregon's business climate strategy around "prosperity beyond growth," integrating measurable goals for personal well-being, social capital, and ecological health into core business climate policies (regulation, taxation, and permitting). Specific changes: Embed well-being and sustainability metrics into business climate decision-making: require major tax, regulatory, and permitting changes to be evaluated for impacts on health, social cohesion, and natural systems, not just jobs and GDP. Create a predictable, "high-road" regulatory and tax environment: simplify processes and timelines, but set clear expectations for living-wage jobs, worker voice, climate resilience, and community benefits as the standard for incentives and fast-track treatment. Align permitting with ecological limits: modernize permitting so that speed and certainty are paired with strong guardrails for emissions, land use, and habitat, prioritizing projects that advance clean energy, resilience, and biophilic design in workplaces. Institutionalize community participation: require structured input from local communities (especially historically marginalized	In 2–3 years, Oregon would be seen as a place where businesses experience a fair, predictable, and efficient environment while communities experience tangible improvements in well-being, equity, and environmental quality. Concrete indicators: Faster, clearer processes: average permitting and regulatory decision times are reduced and more predictable, with transparent, service-oriented "no wrong door" support for employers, especially smaller firms and mission-driven enterprises. Better quality of jobs and workplaces: more employers provide living wages, stable schedules, and safe, inclusive conditions; employee well-being indicators (health, mental health, satisfaction) improve, especially in lower-wage sectors. Stronger community trust: surveys show increased trust in state institutions, higher civic participation around economic development, and more perceived fairness in who benefits from growth. Ecological gains alongside investment: new investments and expansions are demonstrably consistent with Oregon's climate and conservation goals (lower emissions, improved air quality, better land use outcomes).	State legislature: to set the overarching prosperity framework, enact tax and regulatory changes, and require well-being and sustainability impact assessments for major business climate policies. Governor's office and statewide economic development agencies (e.g., Business Oregon, Governor's Prosperity Council): to coordinate agencies, align business support around holistic prosperity, and lead on communication and accountability. Local governments and regional bodies: to implement streamlined, predictable permitting and land use processes that integrate community input and ecological constraints. Employers and business associations: to adopt "high-road" business practices (good jobs, inclusive workplaces, climate responsibility) and engage in genuine partnership with communities and workers. Community, labor, and civil society organizations: to articulate community priorities, help design social contract elements, and hold institutions accountable to well-being and justice commitments.	Helpful elements that should continue and be strengthened include: Oregon's statewide economic development strategy and Prosperity Roadmap, which already highlight business climate improvements, workforce development, and collaboration as strategic goals. Programs like Future Ready Oregon and other sector-based workforce initiatives that link business climate discussions to talent, quality jobs, and inclusive opportunity. Regional Solutions and CEDS processes that foster cross-jurisdictional collaboration, community engagement, and alignment across infrastructure, land use, and business development. Existing environmental and land use protections that safeguard long-term ecological prosperity and community quality of life, which can be paired with more predictable processes rather than weakened.
Julie Scotland	97229	Both	Gravi AI	Private	Business and Professional Services	Corporate AI Training & Enablement	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Getting rid of QSBS for Oregon founders is a huge hit. This is an incentive for local founders to take real risk and remain in Portland. Most founders go without salary initially to start their company. No retirement benefits, no safety net for a long time. They put their own savings into it. Work round the clock. The entire value proposition of that risk was based on what a successful outcome could look like under existing tax treatment. And their incentive for success is good for the state through hiring and taxes. Changing that retroactively fundamentally devalues the risk founders already took. And it doesn't just hurt founders - it will make it much harder to recruit in-state talent to early-stage companies when their upside will be less too. When people decide where to reside and build businesses, Oregon will not be on their list. The Oregon government seems to consistently ignore small businesses. My business has been growing quickly, I am supporting many local organizations with education while also beginning to hire contractors and partner with folks in town to boost their own businesses. But due to QSBS going away - I am actively considering moving out of state because I have multiple family members to help take care of and the tax implications are too big to ignore. I have deep roots in Oregon - business, family/friends, kids in school, history, etc. - the last thing I want to do is move away but the potential financial impact is too large. If someone like myself (with such deep roots) is considering a move, I can only imagine what this means to other current and potential founders and investors with less external incentives to stay. The QSBS removal may be a one time financial gain that leads to a longterm financial downturn for the state as local founders and local and external investors leave.	Get QSBS back in place. Add more incentives to keep SMBs here. Actually talk to the startup community before making decisions like this in the future.	Investment and incentives for local entrepreneurs that keeps them here and incentivizes hiring.	All of the above, this decision should not have been made without discussing with the startup and business community in Oregon.	Would love to learn more about what is available. I follow PDXstartup community for local events and that has been an incredibly helpful resource. I am also open to getting involved if you need AI educators for businesses in town or for government workers.
Thomas Walter	97401	Both	Walter Custom Homes Inc. and Walter Development LLC	Private	NA	Residential land Development and Home Construction	1 - 20 people	Business climate	City of Eugene has destroyed traditional single family construction.	Remove difficult planning and development requirements Add more land that is flat and buildable into the single family residential urban growth boundarty	Flat, Buildable land in the first urban growth expansion in Eugene's history.	Local Government, State Government pressure, and inforcment of the intent of the Urban Growth Boundary. The efficient development... not the exclusion of housing types that don't agree with city planners.	not sure we have waited since 1972 for an expansion of land. I am not holding my breath.
Constance Palaia	97527	Both	Motel Del Rogue	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Hospitality	1 - 20 people	Business climate	TLT dollars used for things other than tourism	Make sure TLT stays with tourism	My business, my neighbors and all of Oregon will be more prosperous	Legislature/local government	TLT
Chris Early	97844	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Public education funding	Increased taxes on incomes over $1M.	Funding for PK-16 funding at QEM levels without impacts to other social service spending.	Legislature	A robust QEM
John Duggan	97530-0524	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Level the playing field. Far too many workers are making less than 3% of their CEOs salary.	Set reasonable wage and earnings schedules so one person can not exploit twenty.	Stronger middle class, stronger economy, less homelessness, more hope.	Legislature must work for ALL the people equally.	Transition housing and regulated working environment.
Paul Maghiari	97305	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	We are in the bottom of being business friendly in Oregon. Small businesses need a change. High taxes and ignorance will not work.	Provide better tax breaks for small business owners, get rid of property tax, payroll, and lower workers compensation insurance rates.	We will start to see new businesses emerging and less empty/vacant business properties. Small businesses should start seeing profits.	Local governments need to stop being greedy, taxation is not working and it is driving good businessowners and families out of Oregon.	These programs are designed to help minorities and native tribes only. I have found that being outside of those categories doesn't benefit the middle class
Margaret Graese	97327	Organization/Business	Bear Mountain Forest Products (Lignetics)	Private	Forestry and Wood Products	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	The Program is not economy wide, nor is it a conventional market-based program. Through this program, Oregon will have the highest cost carbon compliance in North America yet among the lowest emitting states.	I'd like to see an immediate pause to the CPP (Climate Protection Program) implementation. CPP is leading to unprecedented increases in energy costs for residents and businesses across Oregon. CPP is estimated to cost Oregon natural gas consumers $4.9 Billion over the 11-year period (2025- 2035). This figure doesn't even capture increased costs for transportation fuels and propane. Lignetics has 2 plants in Oregon behind NW Natural and between the two plants, it is costing an additional $13K per month ($156K annually) and that doesn't account for the expected cost increase. This charge is not making it economical to do business in	Revising the cap and invest program would: * invest money into state programs, overseen by the legislature * spur investments into clean tech vs leakage * allocate revenues to actual GHG reductions, instead of the arbitrary, unregulated allocation of funds under the current program * create a statutory program that is on stable legal footing * link Oregon's program to Washington and California, ensuring parity and consistency among neighboring states	legislature and local governments	NA
Arthur Gardener	97401	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Greg Ervin	97424	Both	City of Cottage Grove	Public	NA	Municipal	1000+ people	Business climate	Oregon's land use laws restrict the ability to expand our UGBs in a way we require to provide the opportunity to attract industry that can fuel the prosperity of our population	Streamline the ability to expand our UGB or eliminate the UGB system all together	A ready path to expand the city limits and grow our housing stock as well as industrial land	legislature	NA
Stephen Green	97211	Both	Vanport Studio	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Would love for the council to take on helping Business Oregon go from an occasional, reactive transactional player in the business community to a relationship based partner in the states business landscape where they play an active role and have authentic connections in community.	A refreshed leadership team and reorganized focus of the agency from a collection of dated infrastructure and business programs to becoming the state's business "air traffic control tower" whose purpose is to center the needs of businesses across the state, has programs that augment/align with existing partner offerings and is the state's business cheer leader nationally equipped with the data and insights to speak to where we are at and where we are headed.	A clear vision and North Star for Business Oregon with a leadership team of experienced business operatives with real social capital and experience in targeted industries, rural regions and other public partners. Oregon is nationally awarded and recognized for its procurement successes in spending money in the state and supporting an inclusive economy. Accountability is no longer a dirty word and our leaders are just as loud about sharing what didn't work (and asking for help) as they are about the wins along the way.	Starts with the governor taking action and sending a signal that we will not be doing business as usual and hoping for different outcomes. Once folks see that the governor is really committed to this and that it's not part of a reelection campaign they will be more likely to start engaging.	My businesses have never received financial or policy support from the state so I don't have one to mention here.
Vonnie Mikkelsen	97477	Both	Springfield Area Chamber of Commerce	Non-profit	NA	Chamber of Commerce - 800 Member Employers in private, public, nonprofit sectors	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Oregon's most significant business climate challenge is the cumulative impact of what the Business Oregon study identified as "push factors," a pattern that is consistently reinforced by our Chamber's own business climate survey results across micro, small, and mid-sized employers. The most frequently cited friction points are: • The cumulative layering of taxes and fees across local, county, and state levels • A regulatory environment that is often perceived as inconsistent, complex, and difficult to navigate • Permitting delays and unpredictability Our Chamber's 2025 Business Climate Survey further underscores these concerns. When asked what would most improve the business environment, employers most frequently cited: public safety and street conditions (65%), state tax structure (35%), reduced regulations (34%), and expedited or easier permitting (31%). At its core, the primary friction point is not any single policy, but the cumulative and compounding effect of regulatory, tax, and community conditions - largely shaped by public policy and its implementation - without a clear framework to assess their collective economic impact or competitiveness over time, or to inform better policy decisions. This cumulative burden creates uncertainty that makes it difficult for businesses to plan, invest, and grow, and is compounded by the absence of a clearly articulated statewide economic development vision and value proposition. The impact is real and measurable. Employers report increased compliance costs, delayed or foregone investment, and constraints on growth resulting in declining confidence and a measurable loss of competitiveness relative to peer	A temporary pause on new taxes and major regulatory mandates would provide an important signal that Oregon is committed to stabilizing its business climate. However, a pause alone is not sufficient. The more meaningful solution is to adopt a comprehensive "fix-it" framework that includes: • A formal review of existing regulations and permitting processes to improve speed, coordination, and predictability • A cumulative impact analysis of state and local taxes, fees, and mandates • Clear alignment across state agencies on economic development priorities and outcomes A key component of this approach should be the establishment of a statewide competitiveness framework, including: • Annual benchmarking against peer states on tax structure, regulatory burden, and permitting timelines • A "no net new burden" expectation, where new	Success would be demonstrated by measurable improvements in predictability, coordination, and business confidence. Specifically: • Reduced permitting timelines and greater consistency across agencies • Clear alignment between economic development goals and tax and regulatory policy • Implementation of a statewide competitiveness framework with transparent benchmarking and reporting • Stabilization or improvement in business sentiment, investment activity, and job growth • Fewer instances of conflicting or duplicative policy actions that undermine stated economic development objectives Equally important, employers would report a renewed sense that Oregon is a place where they can confidently invest, grow, and compete.	The Governor's Office must lead. With clear executive leadership and accountability at this level, state agencies, the legislature, and local governments can more effectively align their actions. Specifically, this would benefit from establishing a senior-level role within the Governor's Office responsible for economic competitiveness and business climate alignment. This function would: • Coordinate across state agencies to ensure consistency in permitting, regulatory, and economic development implementation • Oversee benchmarking, performance metrics, and public reporting on competitiveness • Serve as a consistent interface with the business community and regional partners • Identify and resolve policy conflicts or unintended cumulative impacts At its core, success depends on having a	NA

Stephanie Hooper	90217	Organization/Business	AGE+	Non-profit	NA	Aging	1 - 20 people	Workforce
Celeste Margot Tell	97209	Both	Epicycled	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Kasten Spethmann	97230	Both	Small Business Development Centers of Oregon	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	101-500 people	Business climate
Sam Holloway	97213	Both	Multiple	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	21-100 people	Tools for growth
Stuart Ragnone	97030	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Devan Fahsholz	97405	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Beth Fuller	97215	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
J. SCHAEFER-JONES	97267	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Gerik Kransky	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
NA	97062	Organization/Business	Thermal Modification Technologies	Private	Metals and Machinery	NA	21-100 people	Business climate
Stephanie Hooper	90217	Organization/Business	AGE+	Non-profit	NA	Aging	1 - 20 people	Workforce
Zac Bakke	97306	Both	IBEW 280	Non-profit	Technology	Electrical Construction	1000+ people	Workforce
Maureen Burness	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Rodney Wheeland	97032	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Janet Marie	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Ali Hussain	97213	Both	Beau Holding LLC	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate
R. Spada	97302-6110	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Kevin Smith	97007	Both	local govrenment	Public	NA	local government	101-500 people	Workforce
William Lang	97146	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Matt Bell	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Michele Peters	97210	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Joshua Boren	97206	Both	Beaverton School District	Public	Business and Professional Services	Education	500-1000 people	Tools for growth
Katie Riley	97124	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Meg Turner	97055	Both	TURNER LEGACY CAPITAL, LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	Real Estate Investments	1 - 20 people	Workforce
Chip Hall	97130	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Susan Conner	97703	Both	Sunnyside Sports	Private	Outdoor Gear and Apparel	NA	21-100 people	Tools for growth
Joy Miller	97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Paul Radway	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Kathleen Samsel	97128	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Henry Felton	97086	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Ashley Walker	97209	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
David Labby	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Stanley Heath	97479	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Crystal Lynn Loggins	97233	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Catherine Ellison	97520	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Traci Stout	97007	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Brock Nation	97070	Organization/Business	Oregon REALTORS®	Non-profit	NA	Real Estate; Housing	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Kari Westlund	97487	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Debra Porta PORTA	97217	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Amy Thomas	97709	Organization/Business	350 Deschutes	Non-profit	NA	Climate Advocacy and Education (Green Careers)	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Madeline Carroll	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
sandra comstock	97202	Both	Community Stewardship	Private	Business and Professional Services	Organizational Consulting	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth

Phil Barnhart	97405	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Inefficient use of natural resources, failure to use energy systems that are most efficient and have the least impact on the natural systems we all rely on.	Rapid transportation electrification including light medium and heavy vehicles and the infrastructure needed to support them, similar changes in industrial and residential energy use. These changes will reduce cost of energy immediately and reduce impact on natural systems we depend on.	Clear movement in switch from oil and gas use to wind, solar electric production and battery installation so that low cost clean energy is available when needed.	A big part of the needed modernization of energy type requires clear and immediate education to promote good individual and community decisions. The clean technology is changing so fast that new systems real value is widely misunderstood.	Support for EV purchase, charging stations, modern building codes that are better than a while ago but still need work.	Change is happening rapidly. State and local leaders need to follow and implement systems that are working elsewhere.	Yes	Business climate	NA
Kara Hayden	97215	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	I want to have a family and I need childcare and pre k to be affordable and available so that I can stay in the workforce and have a family which would create a future workforce. But currently if Preschool for all initiatives fail or are not fully funded or funded adequately and meaningfully, I would be force to choose between staying in the workforce or having a child and not being able to stay in the workforce at the same time.	Maintaining and expanding preschool for all.	Preschool for all in a meaninful way not just in Multnomah County but beyond the county. I used to live in eastern Oregon and availability of preK and childcare out there is ALSO and huge issue.	legislature and our local state government and employers willing to participate in it.	Preschool for All	Look at New Mexico which made childcare free for everyone. or NYC under Mamdani they have increased universal pre K slots and availability and really pushed for increased slots in specific neighborhoods that need it the most based on socioeconomic need to boost equity in the program offering	No	NA	NA
Chaille Shipps	97306	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Oregon is NOT business friendly...employment taxes, hourly wages/benefits, all financial priorities are not necessarily best served in the Protland metro area, but ALL areas of Oregon to highlight their highest & best use of funds to support economic diversity for the entire state to highlight each city's promise for future growth/specialty that is unique to our state!	NA	NA	Legislature, local, regional employers, local government & school boards, education/training partners for investment futures.	Not sure, but entrepreneurship & more business/education/training/internships partnerships.	Idaho, South Dakota, Iowa...all have programs that utilize local/regional coop with growth, housing, economy, safety/protection (crime prevention) connected to big business as well as agriculture & education. Seem to work as "team" concept, less government regulation, taxes...	Yes	Tools for growth	Less regulation & fewer taxes & fees... less government & more personal/professional independence.
Kelly La Croix	97215	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	NA	NA	NA	NA	Preschool For All offered my family care we would not have been able to afford otherwise. We would have had to move from the area to support ourselves - low wage workers need this important program. Please continue funding it.	NA	No	NA	NA
Fred Heutte	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The future of Oregon's economy *must* be assessed from the perspective of an increasingly diverse base that is hampered by capital misallocation and an increasing wage gap.	Make a concerted effort to move to a more balanced tax system based on ability to pay rather than ability to pressure the legislature. Provide ramped up assistance to small business as the core of Oregon's historic and future growth. Accelerate support for primary and higher education and early child development. Incrementally develop a stronger family and health support system. Invest in Oregonians, not in large corporates that already have plenty of resources.	A strategy that connects business and economic development to fundamental drivers of health, education and small business support must be in place. Strategic planning for longer term developmental pathways in process. A comprehensive plan collecting and coordinating all the gap analyses and achievable funding and programmatic ideas that have long existed. Initial legislative efforts to support all these and take additional program and funding steps. A serious look at linking Oregon's fiscal and tax policy to manage short term risk and long term development.	All of the above -- Oregon is good at convening! But not so good at moving forward in a concerted way toward action. I have lived in Portland for over four decades and have always felt that we have 36 counties and every one of them matters.	My primary interest area is energy, where Oregon has a very good track record going back to foundational policies during the OPEC oil crises of the 1970s that have stood the test of time: energy efficiency, advanced Oregon's use of its own renewable energy, a focus on affordability and environmental protection. Getting the foundational pieces right makes everything else more achievable.	Oregon is a small state and has something of a scarcity mentality. We should step up, look at what other small and medium states have achieved despite their constraints to make small and sometimes big steps forward across the key areas including education, health, small business support, community development, equity. We know that "Oregon flies with her own wings," but that doesn't mean we can't learn from others.	No	NA	NA
Diana Richardson	97239	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Preparing future adults with all necessary tools-- social, linguistic, intellectual--starting at formative years(1--5) in order to contribute to the full development of a healthy, inclusive society. The barrier to this is that funding for this will be allocated to data centers and concomitant theft of farmlands, a twofold menace to the health and wealth of Oregon.	Recognize that funding for programs that develop and sustain the wokforce cannot be sacrificed for short-term goals, such as mentioned above.	Success cannot be measured in the short term of 2-3 years. That is the root of the problem. We must think and plan for the year 2050. Acceding to short-term demands of business is unsustainable in addition to being one-sided.	The governor must acknowledge the enlightened will of voters who overwhelmingly support a sustainable, just and inclusive plan represented in the enactment and funding of Preschool for All.	Preschool For All	Preschool for All and similar early education programs funded by taxing biggest businesses who stand to benefit most of all, ultimately, from this investment in Oregon's future.	No	NA	NA
Harriet Cooke	97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	We need to follow up on our investment in families. Preschool for all education benefits the Oregon workforce both in giving all children the early education that benefits them, and enabling parents to return to the workforce.	Do not take any funds that would diminish the preschool for all program!	Preschool for all up and running!	All the above	NA	NA	No	NA	NA
Mollie Butler	97230	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	The government of Oregon and of the city of Portland.	Elect only Republicans by American citizens.	Lower taxes, no homelessness, lawbreakers arrested and jailed and no rampant corruption by elected officials	Everyone.	Clean lakes, rivers and wildlife.	Northern Idaho.	No	NA	NA
Dennis Lauber	97128	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	State taxes	Reduce business regulations and taxes. Stop charging gross receipts tax	Retain current business. Bring new businesses into the state	Legislature and govenor	None	Florida's low taxes and regulatory burden	No	NA	NA
Dave Ganslein	97220	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Unnecessary, Onerous Anti-business regulation.	Reduce regulation and encourage prosperity.	People moving to Oregon, instead of fleeing.	Renounce progressive utopian policies and focus on pragmatic solutions.	None I can think of. None I can think of.	Try Florida or Texas.	Yes	Tools for growth	Transportation
Jim Butterfield	97113	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	stop driving out business, due to your policies.	stop driving out business, due to your policies.	business coming back, and fees dropping.	Salem stops spending money like a little kid with their new /atm card. The citizens pay for that ATM card not Salem	hunting and fishing	Stop over spending, stop spending money on every little problem Govt dreams up. Other states live within a budget. OREGON NEEDS TO FOLLOW	No	NA	NA
Susan Wallace	97218	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Fully funding education, beginning with the voter mandate for preschool for all. It's extremely short sighted to not fund education. These are the taxpayers of the future. In order to keep Oregonians here as future citizens, nurses, doctors, firefighters, plumbers, electricians, coders, then we need to invest heavily in the "start up" with an eye to "return for the vibrancy of the community in the future. Research has shown a huge ROI investing in early childhood, elementary, and secondary education. Ignoring this investment leads to aging rust belt areas with no economic value.	Invest in education.	Fully funded preschool and public education.	Legislature, local government, school boards.	The public education system needs more support	University and research centers directly supporting educators. (UVA, Virginia Tech, Vanderbilt to name a few)	No	NA	NA
Jessica cherry	97702	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Wage issues. I see issues with my clients not wanting to pay the value of our services so that we can pay our employees a living wage to afford housing in my area	Cost of housing and healthcare for employees makes us charge a high premium for our services	Keeping our same employees Keeping clients	Rent control	Paid leave Oregon and OHP	Not sure	No	NA	NA
Bailey Bushart	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Preschool For All, and business interest groups trying to dismantle it for the benefit of their pockets.	Keep and support Preschool For All	Expansion of ages of children who can participate, the development of young minds, long term economic growth for parents	Everyone! But the governor needs to take a hard look first.	Preschool For All	New York has a similar program that has been incredibly successful.	No	NA	NA
Leslie Kochan	97215	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	First, I want to say that the comment period should be extended. I think the use of a limited survey of this type and the short notice and deadline does not in anyway ensure an inclusive process for hearing from the general public or various organizations that have an interest in an economy that is designed to benefit less economically privileged Oregonians or the fragile climate and ecosystems which we all depend upon. I am particularly concerned about support for data centers that in many cases will provide no real benefits other than to those who own and invest in them or whose electoral campaigns are supported by their owners and investors.	I would like to see an end to tax breaks for data centers. They do not need the tax breaks and the taxes forfeited by the state and local governments could otherwise be used to support preschool for all, k-12 education, affordable housing, sustainable food production, etc. Instead data centers are going after valuable farmland at a time when climate change is making it harder to grow food, are covering critical habitat with concrete, are increasing our climate emissions and releasing other pollutants into our communities, are threatening our drinking water and fisheries, and are using precious resources (minerals, water, land, fossil fuels, greener energy sources) that should be utilized to help our state transition to a less carbon intensive and toxic economy. I would like to see a moratorium on the expansion and build-out of all new data centers until requirements are in place to require transparency in all proposals for data centers (ownership, investors, contributions to political campaigns, projected energy and water use and sources - as we see from today's NYTs, data centers, partially in response to push back by ratepayers, are increasingly installing off-grid power systems that burn more natural gas	Communities throughout Oregon would have had robust discussions about the costs and benefits of more data centers. Those discussions would include the impacts to our land, water, and air quality; the impacts on our warming and increasingly unstable climate and food security; and the impacts on the long term security and well-being of our workforce. It would also include a discussion on the use of AI, especially General and Super AI, and especially as it impacts our children. It would also provide transparency on the use of AI for militarization and surveillance.	Our state government has to take a step back and open up the discussion. Our governor takes campaign contributions from the very companies, and likely many investors and other businesses as well, that are benefiting from the AI build out. A process determined by the governor and many of our electeds is destined to get a particular outcome and not necessarily one that will benefit the majority of Oregonians or our environment. A democratic community-designed process should determine how to engage as many people as possible in this discussion. Going back to the question on our future, in 2-3 years, working people are assured that they can do work that meets their needs and also meets the needs of their broader community. For instance, taxes will support jobs in the production of sustainable and affordable housing and expanded mass transit.	NA	Lastly, good jobs are important. Any efforts at the state level to create jobs should ensure that those jobs are well paid, provide good benefits (health, retirement), meet the strongest health and safety standards, allow workers to organize labor unions (free of harassment and labor law violations), and provide dignified and stable work with opportunities for learning and advancing. We are all workers much of our lives and we all live on this planet and face the risks posed by climate change and other pollutants created by unnecessary extraction and production. We all care about the next generation and those who already face climatic conditions and weather events that are not sustainable or survivable. We all want affordable utilities, safe drinking water and places to recreate in nature. Support for job creation must take all of these impacts into account as they matter to all of us no matter what our job status.	No	NA	NA
Mike Farrell	97216	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Stagnant wages and income inequality. Underpaid workers are not a good climate for business that helps people and provides key services that people want.	Support programs that promote living wages and quality of life for employees. This includes but is not limited to Pre-School for all	Everyone has free preschool so all workers can focus on working and not have to worry about day care.	NA	Preschool for all.. make it state wide	NA	Yes	Tools for growth	NA
Kai Carlson	97132	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Oregon tax structure and numerous hidden taxes like fuel	Reduce the size of Government	Lower taxes and less government employees at all levels and all departments	Legislatures and Governor	Nothing this state has done in the past 20 years has been helpful to anyone except governmental employess	Go to Florida or Texas and copy everything they are doing	Yes	Workforce	NA
Mauricia Shores	97080	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	People are leaving. What people? The Joe Good Guy's - Who are the Joe Good Guys??? These are the people that get up every day and pay their own bills, work to feed their own families, save their pennies to pay their own kids college. What does the State do for Joe Good Guy? Demand more taxes to pay for Free Preschool, needles tarps and tents for homeless drug addicts and drunks. Joe Good Guy cannot demand that these people get help. So when the county, city and state demand more money from Joe Good Guy, maybe we all should say no. There is no monitoring of the financial backgrounds of ALL the millions of people that show up saying they need food. There are lots of stories out there about people taking food to stock their kitchens and then they spend their money as they wish. There are stories about people showing up at some government agency with utility bills marked FINAL NOTICE - your water, electricity etc will be shut off. That bill is being paid for without verification of need. The Joe Good Guys are used and abused via taxes and stupid programs. The Joe Good Guys are moving out. How much tax do you think you can get from a state full of people that don't work.	Give a man a fish you feed him for life. Give a man a fishing pole he feeds himself for life.	Accountability for all. Everyone pays taxes - go for it!	legislature, local governments, regulations that allow apartments to be built without mandatory parking for tenants. Way to absolutely destory close by neighborhoods. just wow	None - I am too busy working to pay my bills and taxes	No income tax for elderly Much more moderation on property taxes	No	NA	NA
Kent Zerr	97302-1279	Both	Health care	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Let healthcare be open to be free of insurance PPOs, managed care. They do not provide comprehensive care.	The insurance provided should go for the patients direction. Even the repair of a can is at the discretion of the owner of the vehicle	Better and more comprehensive care at less cost.	Oregon Health Authority and the legislative action.	NA	Idaho	No	NA	NA
Linda Peaslee	97306	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Regulation and taxation	Do not put regulations or further taxes on our utilities such as natural gas, electricity and water	Regulations would put a strain on availability of utilities causing blackouts and customer expense	Legislature and local government	NA	Florida is a good example for deregulation	No	NA	NA
Dave King	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	This survey could have a much later due date. Anti union prejudice is a major challenge.	Mandate that all construction AND OPERATION be done by union labor.	Robust taxation of these fabulously wealthy corporations.	legislature	NA	NA	Yes	Business climate	NA
TB	97215	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	We need a property tax system that discourages people from sitting on vacant land and restores funding for infrastructure and education since those are major public goods that support our economy.	Eliminate property tax compression by overturning measure 5 and 50 and introduce a land value tax	More land would enter the market for sale and the state and local governments would have more funding to support public services including infrastructure needed for development	The legislature and governor. We surely need the Treasurer and others	Protect our land use system. Kotek keeps introducing poorly written legislation that makes development processes harder to understand and decreases engagement that heads off a lot of issues. Middle housing was done fine, but all these piecemeal changes do very little to move the needle on housing while massively reducing accountability in a way that undermines the legitimacy of development practices. In the long run, Kotek is not a friend of housing because these moves will make the public less trusting of development review. We need a comprehensive approach, not half-baked deregulation. DOGE didn't work at the federal level and we don't need massive	Make Polluters Pay legislation in other states shows a lot of promise	Yes	Business climate	NA
Bill Westerman	97520	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Taxes	Vote democrats out	State more business friendly	State government	None	Texas	No	NA	NA
Kevin Christensen	97206	Both	Take Bread Strategies	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	The best climate for business is a highly skilled labor force that's paid family sustaining wages where workers are all free from coercion by their employers. Workers should all have a secure voice through union membership and a collective bargaining agreement and the state of Oregon should be doing much more to ensure all employers give their employees card check neutrality.	The best tools for growth are fully funded public education with small classrooms and teacher compensation that is the envy of the nation. There should be a publicly supported union led apprenticeship program for vocational and trades jobs. And, the state must provide very specifically, affordable housing for all, including our most vulnerable neighbors, including but of course not limited to our immigrant neighbors regardless of documentation status. Furthermore, Universal, free, high-quality preschool is an economic silver bullet — it delivers a 3-to-1 return on investment and raises family incomes by about 22% on average. It's a three-generation poverty reducer that lifts whole communities. It's among the best money a local government can spend to ensure better quality of life for everyone. Universal free pre-K is gaining momentum nationwide. The program we already have here is a national model for how it could and should be done. Expanding it while keeping the quality high will help our region remain competitive when it comes to attracting and retaining workers and their young families	Success looks like high-income households paying increasing amount of taxes disproportionate to average Oregonians and doing so willingly, and happily. Success would look like our elected officials refraining from falling in to pro-business and anti-worker narratives that are false and paid for by anti-working Oregonian corporate interests. Alleviating the tax burden on the average and low income majority of our neighbors in Oregon and ensuring that the wealthy pay for most of the taxes in our state. This should be the priority for our elected officials.	The Governor should lead with this framing and narrative and urge the legislature, local government officials, employers, education/training partners, and non-profit community benefit organizations all support the plan.	Pre-school for all in Multnomah County is a great example. More of this.	Pre-school for all in Multnomah County is a great example. More of this.	No	NA	NA
NA	97213	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Cost of living is too high. Things like Preschool for All are *exactly* what we need to have a great workforce.	NA	Low and middle wage earners are able to live throughout our state and throughout the Portland region	Continue Preschool for All, and other programs that help families thrive.	NA	NA	No	NA	NA
Kristine Evertz	97211	Organization/Business	Summit	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	x	x	x	x	x	x	No	NA	NA
Christine Blystone	97080	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	The best climate for business is a highly skilled labor force that's paid family wages	The best tools for growth are education and apprenticeships and affordable housing	Universal, free, high-quality preschool is an economic silver bullet — it delivers a 3-to-1 return on investment and raises family incomes by about 22% on average.	legislature and local governments	Universal free pre-K is gaining momentum nationwide. The program we already have here is a national model for how it could and should be done. Expanding it while keeping the quality high will help our region remain competitive when it comes to attracting and retaining workers and their young families.	Universal free pre-K is gaining momentum nationwide. The program we already have here is a national model for how it could and should be done. Expanding it while keeping the quality high will help our region remain competitive when it comes to attracting and retaining workers and their young families.	No	NA	NA
Thomas Krause	97071	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Using funds correctly and not wasting taxpayers money	Lower taxes. Stop the ridiculous fees	Being able to remain living here	Legislature and local government	None they are wasting our money	Stopping wasteful spending	No	NA	NA
Laura Nash	97217	Organization/Business	Near Ash Creative LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	communications services	1 - 20 people	Business climate	I'm concerned that the state is moving in the direction of more or greater supports for large businesses at the expense of small businesses and individual residents. We have decades of evidence proving that "trickle down" doesn't work. Incentives for large corporations don't necessarily lead to more or better jobs. Instead, Oregon should focus on supporting the people (through universal child care and preschool, housing and food assistance, community ownership and wealth building programs, etc.). This will lead to more stability, creativity, and stronger economic participation.	1. Prioritize social supports over big business incentives. 2. Support a democratic economy through community ownership of land & real estate (e.g. CLTs), worker ownership (co-ops), participatory budgeting, etc.	More people housed and fed. Parents able to go to work without worrying about their kids' well-being. Stronger pride among Oregonians in our economy and our state. Less fear and precarity. More capacity and energy for creativity, starting new economic endeavors, and participating in democratic processes.	Legislature; local governments; partners with expertise in social supports, worker protections, community ownership, and cooperatives	The Oregon Health Plan, MBE & WBE certification, Paid Leave Oregon	Limited Cooperative Associations and supports for cooperatives in Colorado; Washington's exploration of measuring economic success through well-being rather than growth-based metrics (Wellbeing Economy)	No	NA	NA
John Torrey	97222	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Owned a business in Portland for last 8 years. Taxes were ridiculously high and services provided for them were low. Incredible amounts spent on homeless yet no pragmatic steps taken to ameliorate this, and corresponding drug use (I'm an RN who worked in an Ed, now retired. I am VERY familiar with homelessness and corresponding drug use).	Demand willingness to work (cleaning of trash, drug paraphernalia and graffiti) for food and housing. Demanding that they receive an accountable education to help them get out of that situation is helping them get out of their hell. Giving someone housing at taxpayers expense with no expectations of commitments on their part is silly. No one placed in that situation is going to contribute to society.	Less homeless. Less drug use.	State and local governments	None	Unaware of any in the U.S.. Nordic countries have had programs like these for years.	Yes	NA	Environment
Olivia Pace	97007	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	poverty, wages being too low. I worked in preschools for years, then as a social worker. I was underpaid at both. I'd like to see teachers, particularly preschool teachers paid more, as well as non profits helping the houseless community have increased funding with higher wages for	Higher taxes on the wealthiest Oregonians to fund programs focused on helping houseless neighbors/funding schools and social	MUCH higher taxes on the wealthiest Oregonians poured into the above stated missions	Oregon state congress members and senators, and Tina Kotek would have to abandon some of her cozy business relationships, probably	Preschool for All	NA	No	NA	NA
Kathy Miley	97358	Both	North Fork Transport	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Energy cost increase profits drop and taxes insurance continue to rise. It maybe necessary to stop doing business	Drop the energy credit program. Deregulate gas and oil production facilities. Oregon regulations won't save the world when other countries aren't involved in the efforts	We need to purchase a new pickup to continue in business but that decision maybe fold the business instead if fuel/energy costs don't come down	Governor s policy s need to change	NA	NA	No	NA	NA
Ray Martens	97115	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Construction of combined cycle power plants, especially those that also provide steam to industrial users	Simplify permitting, encourage utilities to build these plants, encourage utilities to build for and fully charge data centers	Several combined cycle plants under construction	Government, utilities and data processors	None I am aware of	Texas	No	NA	NA

Angela Zehava	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Josh Channell	97031	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Jonathan Hays	97212	Organization/Business	Silver Pine Software	Private	Technology	NA	21-100 people	Business climate
Erin Fairchild	97220	Both	Collective Action Consulting and Journal As Altar	Public	Business and Professional Services	also ecommerce	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Julie Edwards	97080	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Donna Nesbitt	97223	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Leslie Shaw	97007	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Michelle Nicola	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Robb Evans	97402	Both	Converted Kitchen Kitchen remodeling/General Contractor	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
Mary Jarvis	97520	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Eric Turner	97386	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Lawson D'Ambrosio	97213	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Colleen Cash	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
SHIRLEY Jones	97603	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Lorri Romie	97060	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
David Purucker	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Daniel Fiske	97630	Both	NA	Private	Food and Beverage	Outdoor Hospitality	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Carolyn Gallagher	97317	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Cindy Meier	97401	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Tabatha Davis	97419	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Gary Adkison	97537	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Christine Bates	97720	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
David Beatty	97071	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Elizabeth Israel-Davis	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Brian Burke	97045	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Domonic Biggi	97124	Both	Beaverton Foods, Inc.	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	101-500 people	Business climate
Tatman	97306	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Lark Saurman	97540	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Bradley T Young	97124	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Tiffany Bowie	97230	Organization/Business	Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc	Non-profit	NA	Workforce Development- Pre Apprenticeship training and outreach	1 - 20 people	Workforce
Martha DeLong	97212	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce
Evann Walters	97302	Both	Fresh N Local Foods	Private	Food and Beverage	Meals and Services for schools	21-100 people	Tools for growth
Ben Borman	97527	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Suzanna Kassouf	97217	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Curtis haugen	97601	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Dan Wolfe	97333	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Shelley Baker-Gard	97202	Both	Shelley Baker-Gard Tutoring Services	Private	NA	Education	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth
NA	97068	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate
Tim Abshire	97267	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth
Thomas Rogers	97223	Both	Tom Rogers Enterprise LLC	Private	Metals and Machinery	HVAC	1 - 20 people	Business climate
Debbie Aiona	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth

Cerissa McFarlane	97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	The best climate for business is a highly skilled labor force that's paid livable family wages The best tools for growth are education and apprenticeships and affordable housing Universal, free, high-quality preschool is an economic silver bullet — it delivers a 3-to-1 return on investment and raises family incomes by about 22% on average. It's a three-generation poverty reducer that lifts whole communities. It's among the best money a local government can spend to ensure better quality of life for everyone. Universal free pre-K is gaining momentum nationwide. The program we already have here is a national model for how it could and should be done. Expanding it while keeping the quality high will help our region remain competitive when it comes to attracting and retaining workers and their young families.	The best climate for business is a highly skilled labor force that's paid livable family wages The best tools for growth are education and apprenticeships and affordable housing Universal, free, high-quality preschool is an economic silver bullet — it delivers a 3-to-1 return on investment and raises family incomes by about 22% on average. It's a three-generation poverty reducer that lifts whole communities. It's among the best money a local government can spend to ensure better quality of life for everyone. Universal free pre-K is gaining momentum nationwide. The program we already have here is a national model for how it could and should be done. Expanding it while keeping the quality high will help our region remain competitive when it comes to attracting and retaining workers and their young families.
Gina Altamura	97212	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Preschool for All is under attack.	The best climate for business is a highly skilled labor force that's paid family wages. The best tools for growth are education and apprenticeships and affordable housing,
Nan Campbell	97212	Both	I am a local film producer, so I am representing my personal small film production company.	Private	Business and Professional Services	Film and Entertainment	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Our biggest problem is that the private market is so volatile that it can be hard to find consistent income and many of our best people have to leave the industry for the sake of their families. But this means that producing content here becomes harder and more expensive and the private market shrinks even more.	Anything the government can do to help our employees ride out the lean times can help keep the best people from leaving the industry. This helps keep the quality of our product up and the costs down, which means the private market turns to us more often, leading to fewer lean times and less need for the government to step in. This means both more art grants and more general services to help those with inconsistent incomes. I can't count the number of people who have left the industry after having children because they need to be able to pay for childcare. Preschool for all has been really helpful, so more stuff like that.
Olivia Mitchell	97266	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	The Prosperity Council should address the challenge of business profit interests interfering with prosperity enhancing measures that were voted in by constituents. Universal, free, high-quality preschool is an economic silver bullet — it delivers a 3-to-1 return on investment and raises family incomes by about 22% on average. It is key to any holistic workforce development strategy in our state. The Prosperity Council should advise within their mandate on recommendations which bolster prosperity enhancing measures that are already in place based on the will of voters. The biggest barrier here is the council not establishing credibility with communities.	Focus on expanding universal preschool as a long-term workforce and prosperity strategy.
Kevin J Schmidt	97123	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
David Weber	97013	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Peggy Carson	97435	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Taxation	[illegible]
thomas liethen	97063-9613	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Janet Goggins	97477	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Christopher Anderson	97055	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Bill Speer	97034	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Cut taxes	[illegible]
Beckett Bergthold	97230	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sherrene Walker	97405	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Jason Stabe	97267	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Keith Moes	97351	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
John Duggan	97530-0524	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Richard Hint	97116	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Tristan Gillis	97224	Organization/Business	PARR	Public	Forestry and Wood Products	Materials supplier for residential and commercial across all of Oregon and WA	1000+ people	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Yvonne Davis	97013	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Merium Theiss-Clawson	97470	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Elana Hutter	97212-1443	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Ron Mathis	97015	Both	Heat and Frost Insulators Local 36	Private	NA	Construction and Maintenance	101-500 people	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Stephen Stover	97304	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Nina Rose	97527	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Jim Schulz	97023	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Milton Bernheisel	97443	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Julie Farrell	97035	Both	Rate Mortgage Company	Private	Business and Professional Services	Finance/Housing	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
GeneEnos	97401	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Simon Brown	97123	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
No Name	97201	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Breonne DeDecker	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Donald Keller	97035	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
ERIC BRANT GILL	97225	Both	We are a tire retail business in Oregon and 15 other states. I am the CEO and founder	Private	NA	transportation / retail	500-1000 people	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Michael Kelly	97603	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Mindy minnick	97302	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Joan Browning	97035	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Karen	97501	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Business taxes	[illegible]
Michael O'Connell	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Getting permits	[illegible]
Anders Liljeholm	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Elia Unverzagt	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Robyn M Harris Robyn M Harris	97217	Both	World Explorers Preschool	Private	Business and Professional Services	Child Care	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Joshua Eichen	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Greg Norman	97222	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Elizabeth Higuera	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Kiki Aardsma Kosokoff	97220	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Melissa Schultz	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Cole logan	97322	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]

Gavin Hales Irvine	97211	Both	West Coast Sailing	Private	NA	Sailing	1 - 20 people	Business climate	The future prosperity of Oregon relies on our ability to attract and retain families. The biggest barriers to this are the affordability of housing and childcare.	Support an unmodified Preschool for All. Support infill housing development, including multi family and mixed use. Fiercely defend our farmland, forests, and fresh water.	Preschool for All fully funded and at full capacity. New infill housing springing up in existing cities and towns, and the cost of housing / rent declining relative to income. No further expansions of the UGB. No further data centers. No tax breaks for data centers or other businesses that don't contribute to healthy local communities.	All of the above.	Senate Bill 100. HB 4084. HB 3546.	Oregon should lead the way, not follow the pack.	No	NA	NA
XX	97222	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	aa	bb	cc	dd	ee	ff	Yes	Workforce	gg
Jacki Hunter	97220	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Preschool for all is a necessity. Working parents, especially moms, struggling to afford childcare and educational activities for their young children is a barrier to being a focused member of the local workforce!	Continue to support social network services to lift up Portlanders! Keep preschool for all. Add additional reading programs, social programs for youth, accessible health care and other essential supports.	Every child having a early education program. Working parents spending less on childcare then then do on rent/ mortgage.	Keep the tax in place. Promote the quality of the program. Encourage employers to support working families. Continued tracking of exponential growth for children who attend early education programs.	NA	NA	No	NA	NA
Brian Campbell	97212	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Childcare costs are out of control nationwide and in Oregon, creating a serious pinch point for many in the workforce as families have to decide between working and staying home to provide child care. This is a huge drain on talented members of the workforce, sapping Oregon's competitive edge and making it that much harder for businesses to thrive.	The Preschool for All program should be expanded, state-wide. It raises incomes across the board and helps create the pro-business, pro-workforce environment Oregon needs to thrive.	Near-complete rollout of the Preschool for All program across Multnomah County, with expanded rollouts underway across many more Oregon communities.	Local governments can implement the program, or state-wide action could happen at the legislative level.	NA	Oregon has been a bit of a leader on this issue, and we can keep that momentum. New York City, with support from the State, is rolling out a similar program. Studies show that across the board, universal pre-K programs are economic powerhouses, providing 3-to-1 returns on investment for communities.	No	NA	NA
Dylan Meconis	97202	Both	Helioscope	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	Opposition in business community to funding social services which broaden and diversify our client base and support our early-career members and members with families and make it easier to attract new members to the area	Changing overall messaging from local business leaders to supporting initiatives like Preschool For All and changes to Oregon taxation code which would stabilize funding for education and housing.	Improved enrollment rates in local school districts and district achievement scores; increase in housing availability	State legislature, county and municipal governments, lobbyists	Preschool for All (reduces my household costs significantly allowing for more investment in my business and in our organization); OHP (insures and financially protects members early in their self-employment careers)	Constitutional protections for LGBTQ+ healthcare and legal recognition; requiring state education degree programs and school districts to teach a scientifically-proven, phonics-based literacy program; free tuition at community colleges for degrees in areas of critical need	No	NA	NA
braden Pemberton	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	The best tools for growth are education and apprenticeships and affordable housing	Universal, free, high-quality preschool is an economic silver bullet — it delivers a 3-to-1 return on investment and raises family incomes by about 22% on average.	It's a three-generation poverty reducer that lifts whole communities. It's among the best money a local government can spend to ensure better quality of life for everyone.	Universal free pre-K is gaining momentum nationwide. The program we already have here is a national model for how it could and should be done. Expanding it while keeping the quality high will help our region remain competitive when it comes to attracting and retaining workers and their young families.	Preschool for All	New York is rolling out universal free childcare for children under the age of 5.	No	NA	NA
Keegan Kyle	97232	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	The FOMO that is driving knee-jerk, undemocratic decisions regarding data center infrastructure (power and water as well as actual data center land).	Pause all current data center related development for a year or until the a full NEPA compliance process is completed with independent oversight. The demand for data centers will not go away, so we should not take seriously any threats from tech companies that the opportunities will go to other states. Require any new data center proposals be approved on ballot measures, subject to the same signature requirements as any other legislature that seeks to get on a ballot.	Environmental destruction avoided, sustainable growth.	State and Local government	Maintaining Portland's Urban Growth Boundary, protection of old growth, and further protection standards for Salmon. These are our Bald Eagles so to speak and should be protected at the cost of economic growth.	I would like to see fines for landlords with over 10 units who sit on empty units because the tax write offs make it worth it to them rather than lowering rental costs.	No	NA	NA
Kisa Quanbeck	97213	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	I would like the Prosperity Council to consider the deeply positive role that Preschool for All plays in supporting a strong workforce. Preschool for All allows parents to return to school, job training, and employment without the burden of figuring out how to pay for childcare. It also supports the future of our workforce because communities that actually invest in families are more likely to have families move there for work, start businesses, and invest their lives in the area.	End challenges to Multnomah County's Preschool for All program. Consider how energy can be harnessed to provide preschool for all Oregonians.	In 2-3 years, I'd like to see universal preschool for all Oregonians and see the steps the state is taking to move toward universal childcare. Investing in children and allowing families to grow our future workers is the best way to create long-term workforce stability.	Everyone has to get on board. It would be great to see the Governor voice full throated support instead of continued, baseless attacks on a locally voted on and funded program.	Increasing apprenticeship opportunities. Increasing career pathways for formally incarcerated individuals. Supporting domestic violence survivors in job training and career development.	Universal childcare, universal healthcare, and substantial investment in affordable housing will have the most dramatic impact on workforce growth and stabilization.	No	NA	NA
Jenna Knobloch	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Cost of living for consumers, employees	State programs that support income diverse neighborhoods	Cost of housing is lower relative to median income, allowing people to support local businesses.	The state needs to support affordable housing. The market is not able to do this absent intervention. A state bank could provide subsidized loans to developers. State programs provide rental assistance.	Existing subsidies should be scaled. Preschool for all helps working families, expanding the labor pool while supporting childhood development.	Social housing in Washington DC. State bank so support keystone businesses like North Dakota.	No	NA	NA
Casey Helwig	97216	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	supporting small businesses and lowering barriers to entry	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Yes	Tools for growth	Preschool for All
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
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[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
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Amie Riley	97214	Organization/Business	Liminal Pursuits Learning & Leadership Consulting	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	PreK-16 and industry tracks for future and climate workforce readiness	We need holistic, sustainable, climate-ready educational pathways for all community members, from cradle to contributing adults - from prek to stably funded universities and apprenticeship programs - that center equity, sustainability, 21st century communication, creativity and problem solving skills supporting collective efforts for our city to survive and thrive.	Universal PreK, with greater capacity development TA Urban serving colleges and universities supported financially and professionally by our local business community, which will in turn serve them.	Local and state government City and Metro business community and leadership	NA	NA	No	NA	NA
Kendra Green	97212	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Oregon needs a large and highly skilled labor force to create, attract, and retain, businesses that are going to make Oregon competitive for generations to come.	Fund preschool for all Oregonians who want to participate. Improves funding for public schools so they have the resources to prepare and graduate the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs, and skilled workers in all sectors of industry. They also need PE and art - we know these subjects improve success in all other areas of school.	Higher graduation rates, more families able to work while their children are young and therefore not fall behind in their careers, and therefore have money to send their kids to college when their kids graduate with high academic success because their children have been supported to be high achievers.	The legislature needs to fund Oregon schools and free preschool for all across the state and stop having this situation where some economically depressed areas get less funding for school. It's ridiculous. We want smart students graduating from Oregon schools throughout the state. It will benefit all sectors of our economy for generations. Quit defrauding our states future by underfunding education.	Portland's free preschool for all.	I don't know, but I think that school funding needs to be equal throughout the state. It's not fair that some economically depressed areas get under funding for their schools. There needs to be enough money for our schools to be excellent. We are laughable in terms of our academic standing compared to other states. But we want to actually have children who are graduating from high school ready to and prepared to advance our economy on a global scale come on. We can retain our rural character and have excellent schools at the same time there's not a contradiction.	No	NA	NA
Ben Dillon	97266	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Low wages. The best climate for business is a highly skilled workforce that's paid living wages that can support a family. Too many of the jobs where I live in Portland do not reflect this.	I would work to optimize tools for growth, particularly education, apprenticeships, and affordable housing.	Less income inequality, which would be demonstrated by a higher median income. More granularly, this would result in a lower 90/10 ratio (i.e., the gap between the 90th-percentile and 10th-percentile incomes shrinks), as well as a lower 50/10 Ratio (i.e., incomes at the bottom are rising more quickly relative to the median). More concretely, low-income workers would see higher percentage wage gains than higher earners.	State and local governments should take the lead in policies that would encourage greater income equality, while making it more difficult for the top 10% to grow wealthier at the expense of the bottom 50%.	Universal, free, high-quality preschool is an economic boon. Research indicates that it delivers a 3-to-1 return on investment and raises family incomes by about 22% on average.	NA	No	NA	NA
Verelle Tomford	97055	Both	Verelle Tomford Graphic Design, LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Encouraging growth and prosperity among small businesses and those newly entering the workforce.	Education needs to be a major priority for the state at every level. Universal Pre-K to give kids a solid foundation and allow parents to work. A focus on K-12 performance improvements. And more training and apprenticeship opportunities via community colleges. Living wages and affordable housing also need to be prioritized.	More thriving small businesses, reduced homelessness, an affordable preschool spot for every child that wants one.	All of the above. I would like to see a reduction in red tape for building and starting businesses, and budgets directed at education at every level.	Preschool for All. Free lunch programs. Rental assistance.	Reduction in building codes and zoning laws (see Texas). Universal preschool (DC, Florida, Oklahoma, Vermont, and Wisconsin).	Yes	Tools for growth	NA
Andrew Nilsen	97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Affordable childcare to enable all Oregonians to return to the workforce sooner.	Statewide universal preschool and early childcare. Expand Multnomah County PFA statewide and add in care for birth through 2 years of age	All parents able to return to the workforce ASAP while not bankrupting themselves on childcare.	The best climate for business is a highly skilled labor force that's paid family wages The best tools for growth are education and apprenticeships and affordable housing	Universal, free, high-quality preschool is an economic silver bullet — it delivers a 3-to-1 return on investment and raises family incomes by about 22% on average. It's a three-generation poverty reducer that lifts whole communities. It's among the best money a local government can spend to ensure better quality of life for everyone. Universal free pre-K is gaining momentum nationwide. The program we already have here is a national model for how it could and should be done. Expanding it while keeping the quality high will help our region remain competitive when it comes to attracting and retaining workers and their young families.	NA	No	NA	NA
Kara McCrossen	97217	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	A viable workforce cannot be seperate from what a family needs.	Training for a safe and learning rice environment for families and their children. A safe home life means a well adapted and sustainable workforce	Families trust preschool for all and rely on the service to stay employed in growing sectors.	All sectors are acting together.	I am able to acknowledge that sevices, which I do not benefit directly from are for the benefit of my community as a whole	Oregon is a leader.	No	NA	NA
Eric Moenter	97220	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	I would like to see a government work to attract top business by touting amazing social programs like preschool for all, and improving public education	Stop attacking preschool gor all and tout it's virtues instead	Univerality is reached and we have free preschool available cor all in multnomah county. We build a thriving care workforce that is not based on resource extraction or AI data centers	Everyone	Preschool for all	Universal preschool is widely adopted and loved in major progressive cities across the country	Yes	Workforce	NA
Tim Duerfeldt	97128	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Ice. Beginning jobs	Require high school community service	Lower rents so they could live on minimum wage all?!	NA	Ag jobs, rent assistance, food programs Yrap	Vote Democrat	No	NA	NA
Luis Morales Garcia	97007	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	What about creating jobs for the people that will be displaced? What is the plan on that?	Science shows that human impact on the environment for natural gases and emissions it's not truly a problem. Where are you getting your facts from and how deep did you look into it and how many sciences have you talked to?	NA	NA	NA	NA	No	NA	NA
Jesica Oliverio	97217	Both	Maté Party	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Not enough skilled labor cost of rent/water	Access to education require empty building to be in use	Not having to move my business out of Multnomah Co. Hiring 10 more people	Local gov	Preschool for all	Free community college. We almost did it 10 years ago. What happened??	No	NA	NA
Megan Gard	97213	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Not enough free childcare. Not enough after school programs for younger grades.	Free childcare.	Free childcare for all.	Local government, education/training partners.	Preschool for All. Helps the most marginalized communities. Helps family become 2 working parents and increases their economic potential	NY- free childcare birth to five. More summer programs for kids or school year that is 12 Months.	No	NA	NA
Eric Morgan	97402	Both	North Coast States Carpenters Union	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	NA	1000+ people	Workforce	opportunity, a overwhelming amount of our members are out of work or they are working out of state because of the lack of work within Oregon.	streamline permits for responsible developers that choose to pay prevailing wages, local hire, and hire contractors that provide full family healthcare. Also continuing to push for funding on the Intermodal Port of Coos Bay.	membership growth, thriving local economies, and opportunities for people to work where they live.	Legislature, local gov, responsible developers	Prevailing wage laws, Registered Apprenticeship programs, Career and Technical Education (CTE) & High School Partnerships (with career pathways, Public investment triggering labor standards, Infrastructure and capital investment programs	Apprenticeship utilization requirements on public projects (Washington & California): States like Washington and California require a percentage of labor hours on public projects to be performed by registered apprentices. This ensures a consistent pipeline of skilled workers, strengthens training programs, and maximizes the long-term return on public investment. Streamlined permitting with accountability (Texas & North Carolina) Targeted incentives tied to job quality (Massachusetts & New York) Project labor agreements (PLAs) on large public projects	No	NA	NA
Arielle Tozier	97217	Both	My independent consulting business	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Our school system is a mess and desperately needs a funding overhaul to increase the resources available for quality education	Put school funding back in local hands rather than the state's (measure 5). Decouple Oregon's tax code from the Federal tax code. Stop trying to undermine local programs (like preschool for all) that enable working families to live in Multnomah county	Increased funding for schools; increased participation in/continued roll out of preschool for all; improved academic performance	The legislature and the governor	Preschool for all	Community in schools funding	No	NA	NA
NA	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	affordability for small businesses	exempt restaurants and small businesses from the $1 million threshold tax	Fewer businesses closing down, more people moving into Portland	legislature, local governments	Preschool for All that provides free preschool allowing more portlanders to get to work and freeing up income for spending on Oregon products	investment in workforce training programs at local community colleges	No	NA	NA
Thomas Merlin	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Keep pfa	Don't dismantle it	Pfa existing with stable funding	Let Portland/multnomah manage it	NA	NA	No	NA	NA
Jessica Martinez	97239	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Right now, much of Portland is in free fall, economically. Growth is stagnating, people are struggling. It is confusing that a program that has such clear and demonstrable growth (in creating jobs, improving the business and helping current employees) would be up for question.	Further expansion and support for Preschool for All.	Universal Preschool for All.	Governor Tina Kotek needs to stop trying to cater to a minority spouting misinformation and keep to what voters actually voted for. We need to open up spaces and training for staff and spaces for preschools that are desperately needed.	Preschool for All	The Preschool for All model in New York.	No	NA	NA
Tim Eisner	97206	Organization/Business	Weird City Games LLC	Private	NA	Design and Publishing	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Better education opportunities for young Oregonians to provide a dynamic and well educated workforce.	Expand free preschool to the entire state of Oregon.	Expanded access to free preschool for children across the state.	Legislature.	Preschool for All in Portland Metro is a fantastic program that should continue.	NA	Yes	Business climate	NA
Dana Mozer	97227	Organization/Business	Private health care clinic	Private	NA	Healthcare	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Our workforce and patients have difficulty due to lack of childcare. The best climate for business is a highly skilled labor force that's paid family wages The best tools for growth are education and apprenticeships and affordable housing Universal, free, high-quality preschool is an economic silver bullet — it delivers a 3-to-1 return on investment and raises family incomes by about 22% on average. It's a three-generation poverty reducer that lifts whole communities. It's among the best money a local government can spend to ensure better quality of life for everyone. Universal free pre-K is gaining momentum nationwide. The program we already have here is a national model for how it could and should be done. Expanding it while keeping the quality high will help our region remain competitive when it comes to attracting and retaining workers and their young families.	Enact preschool for all. The public has voted. It's good for business.	NA	Local government	Universal preschool for all	NA	No	NA	NA
Nico Judd	97206	Both	Shami Café	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	As a business owner, if we are looking to really talk about prosperity, we need to focus on the living standard for all Oregonians. Our biggest barrier to growth and prosperity are the waning social conditions in housing, healthcare, childcare, and education. When these systems are improved and bolstered through supportive budgets and legislation, it enables our city and state to live, work, and spend, in a more robust way. This is the foundation of how businesses survive and thrive.	Do not stop funding Preschool for All, and please, for the love of all things good stop trying to attack and defund it. This program is a lifeline for so many many in our community, including our ourselves as business owners. Becoming PFA recipients for our five-year-old last year freed up $1700 a month for my spouse and I to have the ability to open a restaurant. Without that Support, we would have not been able to make such a vibrant contribution to our community and economy.	Success looks like supporting families and working people with better budgets and legislation on healthcare, housing, childcare, and education so that there are customers in Oregon, not only willing, but able to support small businesses.	The governor and lobby groups for business need to stop attacking the very programs that benefit our citizens and instead serve as the leadership we need to enact more. We need to invest in the people, the families, the children of this city and state in order to make our society, rich and abundant.	PRESCHOOL FOR ALL.	Preschool for All, Healthcare for All. Taxing the top earning corporate businesses in our state to fund social programs.	No	NA	NA
Rosalie Pedroza	97392	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Understanding what types of jobs will be needed in the future and how Oregon will invest to develop the workforce ready to meet those needs while ensuring workers will be paid liveable wages and the environment will be protected.	Education needs to be properly funded and skills development made available to all workers (meaning alternatives to college but still making a liveable wage such as more apprenticeships). Employers need to make fair contributions to ensure they have a top-notch workforce.	Support for the needs of existing and new workforce needs are being provided. The workforce continues to develop its skills while employers have a high quality workforce and value their workers.	All of these but it starts with the legislature (and Congress)	Workforce development, urban growth laws to prevent sprawl by utilizing land already available, resource protection (such as water, power, etc)	I can't point to one specifically	No	NA	NA
Devin Peters	97210	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	The challenge many folks lives is finding effective childcare while working. If someone cannot find care for their children while at work, then they are unlikely to enter the workforce in a meaningful sense.	Support programs like Pre School for All state wide and ensure folks know those programs exist in those areas. Work to decrease friction in entering said programs.	Widespread adoption of these programs and healthy growth of childcare programs across the state.	This would be legislature and local governments.	Pre School for All.	NA	No	NA	NA
Kate Schneider	97212	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	I am a union member, steward, and public sector worker. I believe a good business climate is one in which workers are well-paid with strong labor protections.	Making sure that businesses and corporations are about uplifting all Oregonians, not just wealthy business owners. In particular, supporting the Preschool for All program that was democratically enacted by Multnomah County voters. This will attract highly skilled workers to our area and let our state be a model for what good working conditions could look like.	NA	NA	Preschool for All and environmental protections.	NA	No	NA	NA
Don McCoy	97239	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Investing in our employees is the best use of our money.	Free Preschool for all and putting "Shop" classes back in High School. Coordinating internships with businesses.	Students graduating from High School finding jobs that make a difference in our economy or going to college and finding jobs after they graduate that fit their education focus.	State and Local Governments investing more in education starting with Preschool and encouraging more investments in the trade schools.	NA	NA	No	NA	NA
Sarah Nelson	97215	Organization/Business	Rose and Fern Counseling	Private	NA	Mental Health/Health Care	1 - 20 people	Business climate	As both a mental health therapist working with perinatal individuals and families, and as a parent with children in public schools, I see firsthand how deeply economic stability and family well-being are intertwined. A thriving business climate isn't just about markets, it's about people. When families have access to stable, family wage jobs, parents experience less chronic stress, children benefit from more secure and nurturing environments, and communities become more resilient. In my clinical work, I often witness how access to education, job training, and affordable housing directly shapes a parent's mental health and a child's developmental trajectory. Education systems, apprenticeships, and housing stability are not just economic tools—they are protective factors that reduce anxiety, depression, and intergenerational stress.	High-quality, universally accessible preschool stands out as one of the most powerful supports we can offer families. From a mental health perspective, it promotes early social-emotional development, supports parents' ability to work or pursue education, and reduces the financial strain that so often contributes to perinatal mood and anxiety disorders. The long-term benefits, for both children and caregivers, are profound, including stronger family stability and increased economic mobility. As a parent in the public school system, I value the programs we already have and see how impactful they are. Expanding access to high-quality pre-K—while maintaining strong standards—would not only support families like mine but also make our region more attractive and sustainable for working families. When we invest in young children and their caregivers, we are investing in the long-term health and vitality of our entire community.	I also see universal preschool as a three-generation investment. It supports the child's development, strengthens the parent's capacity and well-being, and contributes to healthier, more connected communities. These are the kinds of upstream interventions that reduce the need for more intensive services later and improve overall quality of life.	Everyone	Preschool for All	NA	No	NA	NA
Kimberley Priestley	97217	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	I would urge the PC to ensure that the protection and restoration of Oregon's lands (forests, deserts, coasts, grasslands, etc) and waters (rivers, aquifers, wetlands, etc) and fish and wildlife remain at the forefront of any recommendations. Oregon's protected lands and waters attract business (quality of life) and add to our economy (tourism, hunting/fishing, outdoor related business, etc), the PC should protect this.	Please ensure that any "prosperity" project align with our state's environmental restoration/protection goals, including among other strategies: ODFW's Wildlife Action Plan, the Integrated Water Resources Strategy, Governor Kotek's EO 25-26	No rollbacks of existing environmental laws. Additional land/water protections as Oregon grows its businesses.	Governor Kotek, State Agencies and importantly legislators.	ODFW's Wildlife Action Plan, the Integrated Water Resources Strategy, flow protection programs (instream water rights, state scenic waterways, etc). Data collection and sharing is critical to our state's environmental health	We should look to other states for stronger environmental laws, especially in the face of federal rollbacks (e.g. CA: minimum streamflows that must be maintained, measurement and reporting of water use, CERCLA, etc)	No	NA	NA

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Steve Curley		97756	Organization/Business	Redmond Economic Development, Inc. in collaboration with EDCO.	Non-profit	Metals and Machinery	Composites and carbon fiber as well as other advanced manufacturing.	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	The cost of infrastructure to create shovel ready sites is one of our biggest challenges. We need to come up with solutions that provide a partnership opportunity with municipalities and private developers. Unique tools that will help fill the gap so development can happen.	I would suggest a shared cost model that the state could help underwrite upfront costs with future private revenues going to payback the state. An example of this would be a Local Improvement District, but potentially carried by the state.	More businesses able to build projects.	I believe it would take the legislature to create this tool.	Enterprise Zone program.
Marion Koehler		97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The stealth increase in property taxes and broader scope of the tax burden. It seems that every time there is a need for money, legislature is very quick to introduce a Bond or bill that increases property taxes or adds yet another tax to an already heavy tax burden. The property taxes are not commensurate with the value of my home, and even without new bonds etc, represent a 3% increase per year. Even while employed at a high-tech company, I VERY seldom saw an increase in my salary of 3% per year. This is not sustainable as an individual, now on a fixed income. Also leads me to question whether existing funds are being used properly with minimum overhead and for the purpose they were intended. Oregon property tax burden is higher than California and Washington..	Overhaul of the current tax programs and structure; audit and public presentation of how existing funds that have been collected through taxes (ie Arts Tax???) are being used with increased focus on how any new request for funds would be used. Reduce the overhead for collection; a good example is the overhead involved for collecting the Arts Tax, only to learn this year that much of the funds have not been applied to the stated purpose. Reduce the property taxes and reconsider implementing a state sales tax; at least start with applying a sales tax to non-residents. Borrow Best Known Methods from California and Washington - if other states can do it, why can't Oregon?	Oregon has established other ways of collecting funds; Property taxes have been reduced by at least 25% and no additional program-specific taxes are being collected. As a result, it is more affordable for individuals to reside in this state and folks are not leaving in droves for neighboring states (while being employed here) because the cost of living is much lower elsewhere. Which in turn leads to Oregon missing out on income from their property/sales and income taxes, as they will be paid in other states.	Legislature, government.	voting by mail
Aaron Barber-Strong		97230	Organization/Business	IBEW Local 48	Non-profit	Metals and Machinery	Electrical Construction	1000+ people	Workforce	Craft licensing, Prevailing Wages, Working conditions, Work opportunities	I would like to see PWR rules tighten up. Ban PWR abusers from projects with PWR. Keep licensing laws and requirements string	A state and local economy that works for all	legislature, local governments, employers, education/training partners	BOLI at the bare minimum. Pre-apprenticeship programs, and state JATC's (all crafts)
Larry Holzgang		97601	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Oregon has long had the reputation for having a high tax burden, but that was really referring to income tax for individuals. Once upon a time Oregon was very competitive for corporations. But not true anymore.	At the very least Oregon should sunset the Corporate Activity Tax.	It would be great if Oregon was in the top 10 for states with a low tax burden.	Legislature.	I don't know how to answer. Just Business Oregon has around 72 different programs that are worthwhile. I couldn't possibility go through every state department to effectively answer.
Esteban Ortiz		97031	Both	The Gorge Association of Aspirations	Non-profit	NA	Environmental, farmworkers	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	When it comes to self employment programs and starting a nonprofit. Their is no programa or even idea how any state agency can help.	Realize that unlike a business. A nonprofit applies for funds and if they get a contract through a government agency. It takes many months to receive the funding. So basically the person starting the nonprofit is unemployed.	Have the self employed programs include nonprofits. Program that will facilitate cooperation and knowledge with state agencies.	Head of the state agencies and governors office.	Self employment with the employment department.
Lynde Paule		97210	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Alignment of workforce needs and training/education of people interested in work	Ensuring that alignment was present along with appropriate recruitment of people to fill jobs	Presumably, an appropriately skilled workforce.	Employers and education/training partners.	NA
Nick Sauvie		97266	Organization/Business	ROSE Community Development Corporation	Non-profit	NA	Community development	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Lack of affordable housing and homelessness. Unaffordable housing makes it difficult to attract talent to the state. Homelessness is a bad look for business, especially in downtown Portland.	Upzoning to allow 3-story walkup apartments in more areas. Simplify and speed up development approval processes. Stop giving veto power to NIMBYs opposing new development. Do not gut Oregon's land use laws, especially for things like data centers that provide few jobs.	Oregon would meet the Governor's housing production goals. We are currently falling far short. More pre-apprenticeship and workforce development programs in the construction trades.	The legislature, local government.	Oregon Housing and Community Services and the Portland Clean Energy Fund have good programs and are responsive to their partners.
Tanner Drey		97402	Organization/Business	Ehlers INC	Private	Business and Professional Services	Construction	21-100 people	Business climate	The state has made it challenging to hire and removed incentives to grow a business.	Rewarding businesses for wanting to scale and hire is the best local stimulus.	Set goals and rewards for hiring workers instead of reducing the workforce to cut costs, and look for programs that reward growing businesses	legislature, local governments first, then Business follows. Whatever is put in place, bad policy restricts business growth; good policy expands it.	Initiatives that fund trade education, streamline licensing, and support local contractors help businesses.
Erin Moore		97103	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	I think there should be tax benefits to creating more jobs. And I think those should be the same for small businesses as well as large corporations. There also needs to be other tax benefits to starting new businesses/operations in Oregon. Right now other states are looking way too good compared to Oregon and we are losing corporations right and left. We need to look to other states for guidance into how to make our business climate more supportive for new and existing businesses. We also need to stop adding more regulations around building codes and environmental studies and all the hurdles that go along with doing literally ANYTHING new in this state. I know proponents of these mean well, but they are stopping businesses in their tracks, which will eventually lead to a major economic collapse in our state, as fewer large taxes are collected from large corporations that end up leaving or not building here in the first place. So many people want to move here, as it's a wonderful state, but we need to support that desire with supporting businesses too. Of course we want to protect the environment, but if we also want to be successful and economically strong, we will need to continue to deplete it, as sad as that is. We need to take notes from the book "Abundance" and stop all the endless regulations and fees and studies that we require around new businesses. There has to be a balancing line between strong minimum regulations and attracting new and expanding businesses. We also need to lessen the restrictions around enforcing rules on homeless people in our state. There are serious issues in my community with some "bad actors" getting away with very bad behavior, and the police have their hands tied as there are very strict rules in Oregon about how we can treat the homeless. I think we need to focus on building tiny homes, on treatment facilities and support, and on treating them like we would anyone else. If I broke the law, I would go to jail. If I were homeless and did the same thing, I could potentially get away with it scot-free. This is not fair. Homeless camps and tents all over cities in Oregon are also scaring tourists away and making beautiful, desirable towns less desirable. We need to model our homeless policies off of our adjacent states so that we don't get so many of them here. We are the state they come to because of our policies	Less regulations, tax breaks for new or expanding businesses, tax breaks for creating new jobs. Treating homeless law-breakers the same as homed law-breakers & creating rules around the homeless that are closer to the rules of our neighboring states so we aren't overburdened like we currently are.	More new & expanded businesses, more base tax revenue (yes there would be tax breaks, but the increase in tax revenue would still be great, since more base revenue even with tax cuts is better than lessening base revenue). More jobs, lower cost of housing because of more opportunity to build new houses. Homeless people in tiny homes and better cared for in treatment facilities; homeless people not as concentrated in Oregon because of our beneficial laws in this state that put us in a favorable light for the homeless who are looking for their best options.	Legislature needs to develop business cuts for new/expanding businesses. Legislature needs to lessen regulations around new building permits and new business models. Legislature needs to amend our regulations around the homeless to better match those of our surrounding states. Legislature needs to create one giant tax pool (General Fund), get rid of the rainy day kickbacks (maybe that's a general vote, though), and get rid of all the little tax collections for various tiny projects. We need to take examples from other states who have healthy business growth (while at the same time reasonable environmental standards), more manageable homeless populations, and more straightforward tax structures.	I like that Oregon is allowing naturally hemp-derived Delta-9 THC beverages without a bunch of taxes and reporting and regulations (beyond strong safety & labeling ones). I think more programs that have less regulations (so long as safety and labeling are well-covered) will help Oregon grow.
Connie Ashbrook		97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Quality, accessible childcare that is available for the non-standard hours worked by construction workers, health care workers, hospitality workers and others. Also support for prevailing wages so that prosperity is shared to the workforce.	Investment in quality, affordable childcare availability. This will take state resources as very few families can afford childcare. Investment in education at all levels. Fewer tax breaks for big business. Continued support for prevailing wage requirements so that workers and their families benefit from building our communities.	Quality affordable childcare = more available workforce, less absenteeism. Continued fair taxes, those who can afford it contributing the most. Protection of clean water and climate. Quality education available at low or no cost for all ages.	Legislature and local governments need to provide the funds and work to develop systems to provide quality, affordable childcare. They also need to work to ensure prevailing wages on commercial construction projects, so that workers and their families will benefit from their hard work and be able to invest in their communities.	I'd like to see the continued enforcement of prevailing wage standards, the continued investment by ODOT into workforce and supportive services for apprentices.
Donnie Evans		97355	Organization/Business	ENTEK International LLC and ENTEK Membranes LLC (together, "ENTEK") own and operate polymer-based film manufacturing facility ("the facility") located at 250 Hansard Avenue in Lebanon, Oregon. Founded in Lebanon, Oregon in 1984, ENTEK has emerged as a global leader in battery separators. ENTEK is the leading domestic manufacturer of battery separators. Separators are microporous membranes that control the flow of ions between battery electrodes that power the entire unit and are critical to a battery's performance. Without separators, a battery would not function. ENTEK also makes specialty membranes for other non-battery applications. ENTEK employs approximately 500 people at the Lebanon facility campus. Beyond its significant contribution to the local and State economy, ENTEK's	Private	NA	Clean Tech Manufacturing	101-500 people	Business climate	Climate Protection Program for Emissions Intensive, Trade Exposed businesses like ours. Through the CPP, DEQ has proposed to regulate emissions from ENTEK in a way that will make our Oregon business uncompetitive. Curtailing or restricting ENTEK's ability to produce battery separators from its Oregon plant would result in leakage of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from the state. More significantly, the CPP would put over 500 Oregonians out of work and disrupt supply chains that Oregonians rely on everyday, all without reducing global greenhouse gas emissions. ENTEK's battery separators are used in batteries that power 9 out of every 10 vehicles in North America, including critical emergency response and military vehicles, as well as EVs. ENTEK's battery separators are essential to Oregon's growing clean tech economy.	We encourage the Governor's office to explore exempting Emissions Intensive, Trade Exposed (EITEs) from the CPP. As a percentage of total statewide EITE emissions, ENTEK contributes less than 1%. Nevertheless, the jobs and economic output for our community cannot be replaced. Alternatively, we request that the Governor work with EITEs to make sure that the program works for their specific facilities, including important regulatory backstops and offramps for businesses that cannot economically, technically or feasibly achieve further emissions reductions. For example, for EITEs, the CPP should exempt emissions from pollution control equipment that is required by Oregon's air quality laws and regulations.	In 2-3 years, Oregon manufacturers like ENTEK should have certainty that the CPP will not require more than is possible to achieve, allowing us to remain focused on thriving here in Oregon.	Governor and the EQC.	NA
Harper Haverkamp		97214	Both	Workers Tap & Cafe	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	The taxation for mega-coffee chains and bar-and-grills, corporate income taxes as an example, are far too low, and have made Portland into a town more friendly to Starbucks and Dutch Bros. than small local startups like ours. We need to ensure mega corporations pay an equitable share to possibly lessen the burden on small startups and local stores - it should be most competitive for small scale resilient growth and difficult for large corporations to use Portland as a business playground.	Increasing corporate income tax for large multi-state or multi-national corporations. Using revenue to offset reducing taxes for small business.	Lower cost to start and operate small business.	Legislature - with bully pulpit from Governor	NA
Tucker Billman		97070	Organization/Business	Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association (ORECA)	Private	Business and Professional Services	Electric Utility Industry	500-1000 people	Business climate	The preliminary results of Governor Kotek's ongoing litigation of the Federal Columbia River Power System will lead to a roughly 6% rate increase to Oregonians who rely on electric cooperatives for electricity. This does not create an inviting climate for new businesses, makes survival much harder for existing businesses in rural and underserved areas, and has direct impacts on the quality of living for working class people Oregonians. Additionally, the wildfire liability risks facing electric cooperatives is substantial and will be unsustainable. The state must find a solution to this, which may need to include liability caps to electric cooperative wildfire liability. Without real solutions, electric cooperatives face the prospect of bankruptcy, further impacting ratepayers and businesses who are located or are exploring locating in electric cooperative service territory.	Withdraw from the lawsuit against the Federal Columbia River Power System and recognize hydroelectricity as a vital part of Oregon's clean energy goals. Explore caps on wildfire liability to electric cooperatives.	Passing caps on wildfire liability and Oregon withdrawing from a lawsuit that is needlessly increasing rates on Oregonians who cannot afford it.	Governor Kotek can solve the FCRPS litigation. The legislature will need to tackle the wildfire liability issue.	NA
John Schmidt		97401	Organization/Business	The Satre Group, Land Use Planning and Landscape Architectural	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	land use and permitting processes and hurdles	Municipalities writing land use code that is coordinated with ALL of their departments; land use, public works, transportion, fire and parks all reviewing code amendments that work TOGETHER.	muncipal code that is written better.	local governments	CFES and Middle housing, ONLY if local governments truly modifies their code with ALL departments.
Emily von W Gilbert		97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	I'd like to challenge the idea that our local taxes are a hörande to business. I think the services they provide attract workers to our region and grow our economy.	I think that SHS, PCEF and PFA should be scaled up to cover the entire state, using their existing models of revenue and program delivery.	Increased social supports for the whole state, increasing our competitiveness.	Legislature and unions!	The state does not, but the Portland region has been invaluable in creating actually helpful programs that voters want!
Trevor Huddleston		98662	Organization/Business	CMS Energy Advisors	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	The CPP needs to be paused.	The economic damage that the CPP creates will counter the Oregon Prosperity Council's economic goals. Policy-wise, it makes no sense to try and attract new high tech, energy intensive businesses into the state, but at the same time be promoting the highest carbon tax in the world.	Reducing the tax burden on Oregon's businesses is critical to long term prosperity for all Oregonians. We compete against states that have an effective tax base significantly lower than Oregon's.	The Governor needs to sign an executive order, pausing the CPP indefinitely. Existing and potential industries that want to operate in Oregon need to know this excessive tax is not coming back or nobody will invest capital in Oregon.	Programs like the Oregon CHIPS Act are really helpful for supporting existing and new industries in Oregon.
Lisa Dodson		97212	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Low wages undermining many working families and jobs that do not include benefits so younger families cannot prosper in this state. Invest in everything families need to thrive.	Require larger companies (not small businesses) to invest in local services/communities to receive the supports that the state provides. Increase taxes on the top 25% of all households for universal full-time childcare; quality, low-cost housing; investment in tuition-free post-secondary education including well-paid building trades (do not spend on the Moda center).	In 2-4 years, more Oregonians are registered in post-secondary programs that lead to sustainable incomes; more parents are entering/staying in sustainable labor forces, more preschool children are in high-quality childcare; increase in working families that are able to purchase homes.	The governor and legislature sets legislative priorities of investing, as above, towards economically stabilizing families. It means not bending to business and high wealth lobbies that always threaten they will leave or divest in the state. Oregon should rely on the productivity that comes with long-term investment in working people and families, not trying to win favor of the wealthiest.	I have spoken with parents who gained access to Preschool for All who can now pursue post-secondary education or full time work and their economic lives --and so family well being --was transformed. My grandchildren were not able to get a PFA slot and their family struggled so my support for PFA is not based on any personal gain. But it is a critical investment in families.
Kevin A. Reed CCIM		97408	Both	Western Oregon Builders Association	Private	Business and Professional Services	Commercial Real Estate	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	SDC's Site Development Charges	When those fees are required to be paid instead of at front end they should be paid when occupancy permit is	Greater inventory for development, better lending practices, less oversight	All of us	Infrastructure development grants for small communities
Bryan Adams		97701	Both	CoEnergy Propane, LLC	Public	NA	Fuel Distribution	21-100 people	Business climate	State taxes, fees, and over regulation	Our organization generates approximately $10 million in annual revenue and pays more than $250,000 annually in taxes and fees to operate in Oregon. This growing financial burden is becoming increasingly difficult to sustain and is leading us to consider relocating jobs to neighboring states. Additionally, recent executive orders related to climate and energy policy are driving up energy costs and contributing to grid reliability concerns and price volatility. These conditions also create uncertainty that discourages investment in carbon-reducing technologies.	Clear and realistic policies allowing for a feasible and non-disruptive transition of Oregon's energy complex. Tax and regulatory measures that are competitive with other States.	Legislature and local governments	NA
Jennifer Pereau		97203	Both	Rawdacious Desserts	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Livability for the working class	Roll out programs including universal childcare and rent assistance so people can afford to work in small business and live in city.	Rent is less than 40% of income for working class, easy access to childcare and free transit	Local government must be bold and stand up to corporate interests and landowners.	SNAP, OHP, ...Preschool for All
Darrel Baumer		97132	Organization/Business	NW Natural	Public	Business and Professional Services	Natural gas	1000+ people	Workforce	The Oregon Climate Protection Program (CPP) is harming businesses and workers in Oregon's natural gas industry by steadily increasing compliance costs on utilities. As those costs rise, companies are forced to cut spending, delay projects, and reduce work that union employees depend on for stable jobs. The program also appears designed to rapidly push electrification without fully considering the impact on existing energy workers and the communities we serve. Policymakers should ensure climate policies reduce emissions while also protecting family-wage jobs and maintaining a reliable, balanced energy system.	The most effective solution would be to repeal the Oregon Climate Protection Program (CPP). The program is increasing costs on natural gas utilities and businesses while putting pressure on family-wage jobs that thousands of Oregon workers rely on. Eliminating the CPP would remove this regulatory burden and allow companies to continue investing in infrastructure, maintaining reliable energy service, and supporting stable employment. Oregon can still pursue emissions reductions through balanced policies that protect workers, businesses, and energy reliability.	Success in the next 2–3 years would mean Oregon has policies in place that protect family-wage energy jobs while still working toward reasonable environmental goals. Repealing the Oregon Climate Protection Program would allow natural gas utilities and related businesses to invest in infrastructure, maintain reliable service, and keep stable employment for workers across the state. It would also create a more balanced energy policy that supports innovation, such as renewable natural gas and hydrogen, without forcing policies that harm existing workers and businesses.	For this to happen, action is needed from state policymakers, regulators or the Governor . The Oregon State Legislature would need to take the lead in repealing or reforming the Oregon Climate Protection Program, while the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality would be responsible for implementing any changes to the program. Employers, labor unions, and industry stakeholders should also be part of the discussion to ensure policies protect jobs, maintain reliable energy service, and support responsible environmental goals.	Programs that support family-wage jobs, workforce development, and energy reliability are the most helpful and should continue. Policies that support apprenticeship and workforce training through programs overseen by the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries help ensure workers can enter and advance in skilled trades with good wages and benefits. Oregon's support for union apprenticeship programs and workforce development partnerships also helps maintain a highly trained workforce that keeps critical energy infrastructure operating safely and reliably. Continuing policies that support infrastructure investment and skilled labor will help sustain stable employment and strong communities across the state.
Mary King		97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Raising median incomes statewide	Significantly increased investment in public education at all levels, from early childhood through college and apprenticeships	(1) Significant increase in state revenue (2) Planning and creation of free, universal, well-paid, multi-cultural early childhood education and (3) planning and creation of new apprenticeships for in demand, well-paid work for both women and men.	We need the legislature to raise the money and create the planning and program structures, with the engagement of educators, employers, unions and other training partners.	We need much more funding and other supports for 1) the Department of Early Leaning and Care 2) a major update and expansion of K-12's Quality Education Model to include mental health, infrastructure, etc., and 3) A statewide plan, perhaps led by the Higher Ed Coordinating Commission

Emily Golden-Fields	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	More options for families and workers to live in Oregon.
Jeff Lewis	97321	Both	Natural Gas Industry	Public	NA	Natural Gas	1000+ people	Workforce	Electric cost has already doubled in the last 7 years. I was paying 7 cents a kw and now pay 14 cents a kw. My average power bill is 300 dollars a month and can be 450 dollars during peak cooling season with all the fancy energy efficiency garbage that never pays itself back over time. My gas bill for heating during peak heating has always stayed the same and averages 100 dollars and during peak heating is 175. And I cook with gas to feed my family. Why would I want to keep paying more for electricity when it's already unaffordable? Natural gas is safe, clean and has the lowest carbon footprint for heating. Moving to power would actually increase natural gas usage as current power infrastructure would have to supplement with natural gas power generation.
Linda R DeLucia	97223	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	I believe that the issue of business taxes is an important one. I see a problem with business not sharing enough of the overall tax burden necessary for quality public services, including education. In every election, year after year, there is a bond or other similar measure asking citizens for an increase in taxes for every public service including schools, police, fire, library, etc (not all at once). However we have become used to seeing this every time we vote. That this has to be done so frequently signifies that there are major funding shortages in these areas. Businesses constantly ask for tax breaks which makes this situation worse. We know in general that more and more people cannot afford what they used to, and many are struggling. Any tax breaks for business increases taxes on citizens. This is timely because I have been considering attending city council meetings to ask why we are bearing these costs and how much business is or is not paying. Another issue is AI. If AI leads to more layoffs, the economic hardship on regular citizens will increase. This is why many unions have AI at the top of their list for bargaining. We live in a world that depends on work and if work goes away, we will have a catastrophe higher than we have ever seen. We are already seeing the effects of data centers around the country. all too willing to let the public pay the costs in their utility bills.
Peter Dorman	97232	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Strong public services, high quality of life.
Tyler Brown	97814	Both	Barley Brown's Beer	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	21-100 people	Tools for growth	One of the major challenges facing the tourism and visitor industry in Oregon is the lack of consistent state investment in gateway infrastructure. Visitors traveling into our communities form their first impression of Oregon at freeway exits, rest areas, and highway signage. Unfortunately, many of these critical entry points have not received meaningful updates or maintenance in decades. In Baker County, for example, the primary gateway from Interstate 84 into Baker City—Exit 304—appears largely unchanged since it was constructed in the 1970s. Landscaping is poorly maintained, with dead or dying shrubs, weeds, and visible trash. Areas where landscaping has been removed have been replaced with gravel that does not reflect the natural character of Eastern Oregon. At the same time, interstate signage promoting key attractions—such as Baker City's nationally recognized historic district and the Geiser Grand Hotel—has faded to the point of being difficult to read. These conditions create an unfortunate first impression for visitors entering Oregon and undermine the state's reputation as a premier travel destination. Strategic investment in gateway infrastructure, signage, and basic maintenance would significantly strengthen Oregon's tourism economy. Clean, attractive freeway exits and well-maintained visitor signage are relatively small investments that can dramatically improve the visitor experience, support local tourism economies, and reinforce Oregon's brand as a welcoming and high-quality destination.
Selvin Cano	97301	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The Oregon Climate Protection Program (CPP) is harming businesses, workers and consumers in Oregon's natural gas industry by steadily increasing compliance costs on utilities. As those costs rise, companies are forced to cut spending, delay projects, and reduce work that union employees depend on for stable jobs. The program also appears designed to rapidly push electrification without fully considering the impact on existing energy workers and the communities we serve. Policymakers should ensure climate policies reduce emissions while also protecting family-wage jobs and maintaining a [illegible]
Jered Thomas	97302	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Steve mcintosh	97086	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Affordability for normal people
Jason Rusch	97103	Both	Northwest Natural Gas	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	1000+ people	Workforce	[illegible]
Ana Salinas	97045	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Don Taylor	97103	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Twila Jacobsen	97405	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Faith Dubin	97223	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Michael Cox	97038	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Robert Thornton	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Austin Whittaker	97201	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Heath Sliker	97017	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Barbara Casey	97230	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Andrew S Klug	97303-7530	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Tricia Jamison	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Mike Jamison	97203	Both	Northwest Natural Gas Company	Private	NA	Energy	1000+ people	Business climate	[illegible]
ADAM LUTTROPP	97080	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Jaden McIntosh	97045	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	CPP
Andrew S Klug	97303	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Lynette Herlan	97470	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Lack of affordable housing
Vanessa Moore	97080	Both	NW Natural	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1000+ people	Business climate	[illegible]
Matt Noel	97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Richard Sheperd	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Eli Matthews	97504	Organization/Business	The Chamber of Medford & Jackson County	Private	Business and Professional Services	Civic Non Profit	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Kory	97004	Both	The Dirty Cowgirl Saloon Wasco, OR Sherman county	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]

Rob Annear	97212	Organization/Business	Annear Water Resources, LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	For our small firm of 4 a big burdens is the number of State wesbites and Departments I have to keep track of to stay in business. Sites include, at minimum: Secretary of State, Oregon Dept of Revenue, Frances Online, Department of Consumer and Business Services, Saif Corporation, OregonBUYS, and COBID Certification Management System, and last Business Oregon.
Scott martin	97007	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	tax money managment
Evan Brady	97053	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The climate protection program needs to be paused. It's a direct threat to the prosperity of Oregon. It increases the cost of living on all Oregonians, it threatens jobs in several ways, and solves a problem in which Oregon doesn't have. Our air quality is amazing. Even if Oregon had zero emissions, it would still not make an impact on our climate.
Misa Olsen	97702	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	There is a large untapped talent pool of job seekers that businesses are hesitant to hire. These include people with disabilities, reentry, and other marginalized populations.
Evan Brady	97053	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The climate protection program is a direct threat to affordable clean, reliable, and an increasingly renewable source of energy in the state. Economies thrive with inexpensive energy and crash when energy becomes expensive or unavailable.
Doug Adams	97223	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Keep our current way of our practice. Please don't change it!
Yesenia Gallardo Avila	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Support small businesses as core economic drivers, not just large employers. Expand access to technical assistance, capital, and incentives that help local entrepreneurs start and grow.
Chad Brewer	98685	Both	NW Natural	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	500-1000 people	Workforce	NA
Corey Harvey	97058	Organization/Business	NW Natural Gas	Private	NA	Natural Gas	1000+ people	Business climate	My family and I grew up in the Columbia Gorge. I traveled the country looking for a stable career. Getting this job at NW Natural was a huge blessing to my family. One of the oldest businesses in Oregon, fair pay and benefits. Sounded like a solid choice and it was an opportunity to move back home. This has been an amazing opportunity for me. I love my job, my coworkers and my community. Shortly after getting this job, natural gas started getting attacked. Now this stable company that has been around for 165 years might not be so stable thanks to environmental groups and politics. I live with a slight anxiety that one day, the way I provide for my family will no longer be an option. There are many aspects of this attack that don't make sense. This new idea that the state will go "green" and phase out natural gas is not backed by good math or frankly, common sense. A huge amount of our state's electricity production comes from natural gas power generators. Those generators are extremely inefficient when compared to the energy created by running natural gas directly to the equipment in customer's homes. Removing your gas furnace to go electric is not only cost prohibitive but usually requires more natural gas to be burned to generate the electricity than before. Electric companies in Oregon burn more gas than gas companies do. Electric companies emit more greenhouse gasses than gas companies do in Oregon and it's not even close. The same group of people that have "We believe in science" signs in their yard are ignoring science and basic math completely. It's honestly sad. It feels like a witch hunt. It seems like everyone is throwing facts out of the window to appease a small group of people with picket signs. Now thousands of livelihoods are threatened by an unsound narrative. The amount of energy this company reliably delivers is massive and is equal to the power generation of several nuclear power plants. Where is this energy going to come from? It certainly will not come from solar or wind farms. The hydro power we have is already under threat of being removed, so I doubt we will be building more. We definitely aren't building nuclear in Oregon either. So where will it come from? We do not have the electrical infrastructure to add the energy load this company provides. We would have
Matt Baker	97068	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The Prosperity Council has a significant credibility issue. While the stated goals are on point and create a fantastic roadmap for improving Oregon's business climate, the Governor's office continues to make decision that are directly counter to the state goals within the Prosperity Plan. After reading the Prosperity Plan I was encouraged that the State may finally stop punishing businesses for choosing to domicile in Oregon, but unfortunately recent anti-business actions continue with more of the same.
Hailey Dorr	97030	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The climate protection program. This will only hurt Oregonians. Oregonians are not being listened too.
Joseph Dolezal	97267	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The Climate Protection Program has become the highest carbon pricing program in North America. For those working in this industry, keeping this plan directly affects jobs where individuals have spent their entire working career at. As for myself, my job allows me to provide for my family but this legislation makes me worried for the future. This plan makes everyday energy that is used by hundreds of thousands of people, much more expensive.
Gilbretta Boardman Hutchison	97103	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	A general lack of jobs, but especially jobs that pay well.
Howard	97115	Both	OPEIU Local 11	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Union- represent members in collective bargaining, advocacy, and organization al leadership.	500-1000 people	Business climate	Climate Protection Program- the CPP is not a worker-centered policy. It poses a direct threat to union jobs and the broader contractor workforce that depends on a stable energy infrastructure. By intentionally restricting natural gas and imposing costly and often unworkable mandates, the program discourages investment in our industry, delays critical infrastructure projects, and ultimately suppresses hiring and long-term job growth.
Mary Killion	97818	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Land use and private landowner rights specifically regarding rezoning EFU ground to industrial. Also, implementing existing rights to use EFU land for solar and wind farms with impacts on surrounding landowners (ie land values and impacts on their own land use). Also, Urban growth boundaries expanding into areas with his agricultural use- addressing the impacts to landowners and production related to our food supply.
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
Paula Lafferty	97402	Both	SnoTemp Cold Storage	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	Our business supports food and beverage manufacturers - the feedback I receive is that this is a challenging state to grow in because of tax structure and regulations. I support responsible growth and sustainability, but we need to pay attention to what surrounding states are doing as well. Existing manufacturers can move, new businesses have choices, and they will go to Idaho or Utah instead of Oregon because of the regulations. This doesn't mean that they aren't already doing many of those things, but the need to report and the possibility of being out of compliance makes it challenging to manage.
Susan Snyder	97823	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Too many regulations, taxes and fees too high
NA	97213	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Representation of small and BIPOC/LGBTQ is limited and tokenized with repeat organizations or those already aligned with powerful insider interests
Susan Anderson	97801	Both	NA	Private	NA	Commercial Cattle ranch	1 - 20 people	Business climate	We are being taxed out of business! Fuel taxes, state taxes all the additional taxes and regulations are creating a business climate where businesses are leaving Oregon for a state that wants Businesses! Education in Oregon is disgraceful! We down more per capita per student that most all of the states and have some of the lowest scores!
Viola Wilkins	97823	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Lack of good paying jobs to keep our most valuable resource, our youth, in our communities.
Keri Heideman	97843	Both	Personal Farm	Public	Business and Professional Services	Farmer /police	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Taxes are outrageous and its becoming nearly impossible to own a business in the state of Oregon. Mental health hospitals NEED to be returned to the state. IN EVERY COUNTY!
Josh Carter	97204	Organization/Business	UpStart Collective	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	One of the biggest challenges I would like the Council to address is Oregon's consistently low ranking when it comes to starting and sustaining businesses. Despite having strong talent, innovative founders, and desirable places to live, Oregon often ranks near the bottom nationally for business friendliness and new business formation. The biggest barrier is the cumulative friction created by a complex regulatory environment, high and unpredictable tax structures, and slow permitting processes. Individually, each requirement may be manageable, but together they create significant uncertainty and cost for founders and growing companies. This discourages entrepreneurs from starting businesses here and pushes existing companies to expand elsewhere. If Oregon wants to strengthen long-term prosperity, we need to make it easier—not harder—to start, grow, and keep businesses here. That means streamlining permitting and licensing, improving tax predictability, and creating a regulatory environment that values speed, clarity, and partnership with entrepreneurs. Reducing these friction points would have an outsized impact on job creation, innovation, and economic resilience across the state.
Ann Bunnenberg	97221	Both	White Horse Medical	Private	Bioscience	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Capital formation for innovation economy companies. Maintaining QSBS deduction link to federal rules
Kayla McIntosh	97823	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Behaviors in classrooms are a barrier in education.

Steve Deacon	97232	Both	Deacon Development, LLC	Private	NA	Real Estate Development	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Nathaniel Palmer	97034	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
henry fields	97141	Organization/Business	fisheries	Private	Outdoor Gear and Apparel	NA	101-500 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Kylie Nichols	97603	Both	ON 140 Feed & Seed Inc	Private	NA	Agriculture Retail	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Jim Labbe	97217	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
NA	97239	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Martha Neustadt	97703	Both	V4 Final, Inc.	Private	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Cody Phoenix	97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Emily Hartlerode	97478	Both	Oregon Folklife Network, a semi-independent division of the Museum of Natural and Cultural History at the University of Oregon	Public	NA	Arts and Culture	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Avery Jesmer	97527	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Jerry Shriner	97015	Both	Met-Tek, Inc Commercial heat treatment	Public	Metals and Machinery	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Kristen Helton	97405	Organization/Business	Quality Care Connections	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	[illegible]
Staci Calkins	97504	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Explore The Dalles	97058	Organization/Business	Freebridge Brewing	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Jennifer Bold	97823	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Eric Durrin	97202	Both	Bullseye Glass Company	Private	Metals and Machinery	manufacturing	101-500 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Patrick Benavides	97035	Organization/Business	Tube forgings of America, Inc., Portland, OR	Private	Metals and Machinery	NA	101-500 people	Business climate	[illegible]
NA	97823	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Jessika Scott	97470	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Sandra Bishop	97405	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Jeremy Parker	97060	Organization/Business	Oregon induction and thermal	Private	Metals and Machinery	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Tony Moran	97080	Organization/Business	Oregon Induction and Thermal	Public	Metals and Machinery	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Kyle Fessler	97071	Both	Woodburn Nursery & Azaleas	Private	NA	Horticulture	101-500 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Ted Lehmann	98109	Organization/Business	Large natural gas users in the State of Oregon	Private	Metals and Machinery	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Dave Larecy	97470	Both	Con-Vey and 7robotics	Private	Forestry and Wood Products	Industrial Automation	101-500 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Jason Brandt	97304	Both	Oregon Restaurant & Lodging Association	Private	Food and Beverage	Accommodations	1000+ people	Business climate	[illegible]
Shandie Johnson	97029	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]
James Santee	97103	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Kathryn Williams	97204-3034	Organization/Business	NW Natural	Public	NA	Energy	1000+ people	Business climate	[illegible]
David Reid	97103	Organization/Business	Astoria Warrenton Area Chamber of Commerce	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Sarah Gledhill	97214	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
John Sweet	97420	Both	Coos County	Public	NA	County Government	101-500 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Larry Dickson	97535	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Pamela Dickson	97535	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
David Squire	97005	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Timothy Bishop	97850	Both	City of La Grande Economic Development La Grande Main Street Rural resident	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Dietrich Wieland	97214	Organization/Business	An architecture, engineering, and land use planning firm.	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	101-500 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Karen Jacobson	97035	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Lawrence Atkinson	97304	Organization/Business	Instruction Construction	Non-profit	NA	Workforce training	1 - 20 people	Workforce	[illegible]

Frank Bubenik	97062	Both	City of Tualatin	Public	NA	Government	101-500 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]
patrick j carney	97304	Both	OGSC, 2 LLC Salem Center Mall, Macy's, Movie Theatre	Private	Business and Professional Services	Mall	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Andy Linerud	97504	Organization/Business	Express Employment Professionals	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	101-500 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Richard Hall	97214	Organization/Business	Baerlic Brewing Company	Private	Food and Beverage	Brewing Industry	21-100 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Joseph Gardner	97008	Both	The lobbying firm of Gardner & Gardner	Private	Business and Professional Services	Government Relations	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Matt Ertle	97702	Organization/Business	PrideStaff - Staffing and Recruiting serving Central Oregon	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Kristi Wilson	97124	Both	Portland Community College	Public	NA	Education	1000+ people	Workforce	[illegible]
Liz Hartman	97034	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Anna Osborn Ponzetti	97031	Organization/Business	The Next Door, Inc.	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	NA	101-500 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Erica C Mitchell	97031	Organization/Business	Hood River Distillers, Inc	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	[illegible]
ryan p deckert	97225	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Tabitha Eck	97413	Organization/Business	McKenzie Community Land Trust	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Community Land Trust	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Lourdes Herencia Carrasco	97116	Organization/Business	Adelante Mujeres	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Education, coaching and assistance	101-500 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Greg Manning	97219	Organization/Business	Pioneer Project Partners, LLC, a real estate development financial consultant	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Steve Koper	97068	Organization/Business	City of West Linn	Public	NA	government	101-500 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Sarah Lechner	97701	Both	Coraggio Group	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	[illegible]
Tony Moran	97080	Organization/Business	Oregon Induction and Thermal	Private	Metals and Machinery	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	The CPP.
Doug Puerta	97217	Organization/Business	Stack Metallurgical	Public	Metals and Machinery	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	[illegible]
NA	97325	Both	NA	Private	Business and Professional Services	Trades	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Mark Childs	97223	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Taxes are too high
NA	97405	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]
Kris Bennett	97838	Both	Bennett Botanical Gardens?KRISanthemums	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Alice Dale	97201	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Dee Anne Everson	97504-7114	Both	United Way of Jackson County	Non-profit	NA	human services	1 - 20 people	Workforce	[illegible]
Mr. Chao	97030	Both	Asian Business Coalition (ABC)	Non-profit	NA	Multistream financial and tax planning	101-500 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Erubiel Valladares	97338	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Audra Marazzani	97302	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Lack of support
Tiffany Wilkins	97812	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]
Annette Fernald	97124	Both	Interstaste All Battery Center	Public	NA	Batteries and back up power	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]
Nathan Nayman	97239	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]
Scott Larson	97707	Organization/Business	Visit Central Oregon	Non-profit	NA	Tourism	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]

Danielle Cunningham	97402-5890	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Oregon must address child care as core economic infrastructure, not as a private family issue. Across the state, families cannot fully participate in the workforce when child care is unavailable, unaffordable, or unstable. At the same time, providers are being asked to deliver high-quality care within a broken business model shaped by thin margins, high operating costs, workforce shortages, and limited access to capital for expansion. Oregon already has important supports in place, but the biggest friction point is that demand from working families far exceeds the available supply of affordable, quality care, especially infant and toddler care. When parents cannot find care, they reduce hours, leave jobs, turn down promotions, or exit the workforce entirely, which directly affects employers and the broader state economy. Programs like ERDC, Baby Promise, Preschool Promise, SPARK, and CCR&R help, but they are not yet enough to close the gap between what families need and what the market can sustainably provide.	I would recommend a statewide child care economic sustainability strategy that combines public investment, employer partnership, and targeted business-sector responsibility. First, Oregon should strengthen direct investments that help expand child care supply, including facility development, start-up support, and business sustainability funding for providers. Business Oregon's Child Care Infrastructure Fund is already designed to support establishment, expansion, and improvement of child care facilities, and that kind of investment should continue and grow. Second, Oregon should create a formal employer child care partnership model that incentivizes large employers to help subsidize child care for their workers or invest in employer-supported or employer-sponsored child care slots. Federal tax policy already allows employers to claim a credit for qualified child care facility and resource-and-referral expenditures, which Oregon could build on with a state-level strategy. Third, Oregon should explore a modest assessment or tax on large businesses to create a dedicated child care fund that can be used to expand supply, stabilize the workforce, and support infant/toddler care in	In 2–3 years, success would look like measurable increases in child care supply, especially for infants and toddlers, more stable child care businesses, and stronger workforce participation among parents. Oregon should be able to point to more licensed slots created or preserved, shorter waitlists, greater access in rural and underserved communities, and improved compensation and retention for the early childhood workforce. Success would also mean that large employers are actively participating in solutions, whether by subsidizing care, purchasing reserved child care slots, partnering with local providers, or helping open worksite or near-site centers. For families, success would mean fewer employment disruptions caused by child care instability. For employers, it would mean better recruitment, retention, and attendance. For the state, it would mean treating child care as an economic development strategy tied to labor force participation, business growth, and long-term prosperity. Michigan's Tri-Share model and Kentucky's employer partnership model show that cost-sharing between the state, employers, and employees can reduce family burden while helping employers retain talent	This requires coordinated action across sectors. The Oregon Legislature would need to authorize funding, create any new tax or employer partnership structure, and align child care policy with statewide economic goals. DELC would play a central role in implementation, building on existing programs and infrastructure. Business Oregon should continue to help finance facility development and expansion. Employers, especially large employers, must be part of the solution because child care instability directly affects their workforce. Local governments and regional economic development partners can help identify community-specific gaps and support facility siting, zoning, and partnerships. CCR&R agencies, Early Learning Hubs, community colleges, and workforce partners are also essential because supply growth depends on recruiting, training, and retaining educators while helping providers strengthen their business operations. This is not just an early learning issue; it is a workforce, business, and economic competitiveness issue.	Oregon has several strong programs that should absolutely continue and be strengthened. ERDC is critical because it helps working families, families in school, and others with child care costs, including registration fees. Baby Promise is especially important because it is designed to increase access to high-quality infant and toddler care while enhancing quality. Preschool Promise remains a valuable mixed-delivery model that provides free, high-quality preschool for eligible families. SPARK is important because it gives Oregon a statewide quality recognition and improvement system that helps programs improve and helps families understand quality. CCR&R partners are also essential because they connect families to care, provide professional learning, and support quality improvement and career pathways. Together, these policies create a strong foundation. The next step is not replacing them, but better funding them, connecting them, and linking them more intentionally to workforce and economic strategy.	Oregon should look closely at states that are treating child care as a shared economic responsibility. Michigan's Tri-Share model is a strong example because the cost of licensed child care is shared among the employer, employee, and the state, which reduces costs for families while helping employers attract and retain workers. Kentucky's Employee Child Care Assistance Partnership similarly creates a public-private cost-sharing approach in which employers contribute toward employees' child care and the state matches support based on income. Vermont offers another important lesson: it enacted a child care contribution on employer payroll to create a dedicated, ongoing financing stream for child care and early education. And New Mexico has shown the importance of direct workforce investment through wage supplements and broader child care expansion efforts, recognizing that supply cannot grow without stabilizing compensation for educators. Oregon does not need to copy any one state exactly, but it should borrow the best elements: shared financing, employer participation, dedicated revenue, workforce compensation, and supply-building investments	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
NA	97351	Both	NA	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Payroll and business taxes are crippling to employers of small businesses	Reduce payroll taxes, reduce workers compensation rates, repeal paid leave or exempt small businesses.	Not going out of business whenever a small business tries to hire employees	Legislature	Very few help businesses or employers, I honestly can't think of one that has done anything but hurt my business and my ability to employ workers	NA	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
NA	97302	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Wages are too high for a small independent business to hire anyone? Every interaction with govt. is slow and you get different answers from everyone	A learning or training wage, lower business taxes	More people employed	All	NA	NA	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Travis Hillman	97063	Organization/Business	Wamic Market LLC	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Taxes, fees and regulations	All license taxes and fees should be proportionate to gross revenue or Revenue based on items sold example cigarette sole should be based on total pack sold not a flat rate	Adjustments to fees taxes regulations based on size of business and geographic location	Legislature	Currently I cannot think of a state program that we use that would be considered successful when we relate to programs or regulations estate most of the time it has a negative characteristic	NA	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
James Millegan	97128	Both	Pegasus Equestrian International	Private	NA	Equestrian Venue and Resort	1 - 20 people	Business climate	High income taxes and lack of capital gain taxes	Add capital gains and somehow get the Portland Area to reduce their extremely add on high tax rates.	Adding capital gain taxes, reducing rates in the Portland area	Local Governments	Oregon unique land use program that protects farm/forest land and encourages development in urban areas very important to our success.	NA	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Laura Rrcko	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Oregon's tax structure	Implement a sales tax and reduce income taxes. Our tax structure is Byzantine.	A sales tax.	Legislature, governor and the voters.	I love Oregon's land use laws and our focus on protecting our open spaces, waterways, oceans and rivers. We have some of the most beautiful land in the country.	NA	Yes	Workforce	NA	Educating our kids. Oregon's outcomes are abysmal and our kids - and future workforce - are the ones suffering.	Implement statewide standards. Less control to the teachers union.	Higher graduation rates.	I'm not really sure… I don't doubt the intent of our governor or legislature but I'm baffled as to why they can't seem to tackle this challenge.	NA	NA	No
Lamont J Wolverton	97367	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Taxes, regulation lack of support for small business	Cut taxes, let the people vote in November, teach the kids how to work, mamy are unhirable	Growing business, low cost transportation, business credits and support, our Workforce Oregon here is worthless, they don't care or acknowledge you looking for employment	Tina Kotek, it all trickles down, instead of a cheerleader for Oregon, her policies are destroying our way of life. The only construction here is state funded low cost housing	Small Business Loans, end Sanctuary status, support law enforcement, there moral is very low	Tough on crime, Florida, Reading programs from Mississippi success, better drug treament, most addicts have never been approached by social services, this discourages tourist	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	No
Janet Ziedrich	97114	Both	My farm	Private	NA	Farming	1 - 20 people	Business climate	The business climate is really rough for farmers. Between all the regulations on fuel, chemicals that make things grow, and taxes, we are a dying breed, many selling out to corporations. Bye bye century farms.	Stop with the virtue signaling regulations on fuel, emissions and chemicals. Until there is an affordable solution, stay out of what you don't understand. Disconnect from federal tax code is extremely problematic as it throws possible expansion and reinvestment funds for my business right into the Oregon bloated budget to be used on some pet project. Track record isn't great with usage of taxpayers funds.	Rolling back the oppressive regulations, re connecting with federal tax code.	A new governor could undo much of the damage in the stroke of a pen, on day one. I'm praying for a change.	Can't think of any.	Nothing on the west coast but Midwest states that don't virtual signal with woke policy seem to leave farmers alone to feed the population.	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Jennifer Groth	97209	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Rural economic development is often overlooked in these types of initiatives.	Ensuring rural voice is included in the deliberations of the Council, ensuring a full understanding of rural challenges and opportunities.	Rural-specific solutions to economic issues, state resources targeted to rural communities. Economic development districts in rural regions are supported to address community-defined needs.	Legislature, governor, economic development districts, local governments.	Rural Opportunity Initiative, Technical Assistance for small businesses and emerging entrepreneurs, Legislature's Bipartisan Rural Caucus, thoughtfully including virtual testimony as part of legislative deliberations, Regional Solutions Teams.	Aspen Institute Community Strategies Group research into rural intermediary organizations, USDA Rural Development's past support of place-making initiatives	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
NA	97230	Both	NA	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Need to cut extra corporate tax rate first off. That lost Traeger and Dutch Bros, well a bigger reason. Traeger leaving oregon went from 14 million to now over 150 million and now an IPO. My business partner is leaving this state just because of how bad she is taxed and cant find great workers to her level locally. They all move to more desirable states.	Cut the corp tax rate if they will hire new employees...just like Nike did when they said vs leaving.	A top 30 state to outside investors. We need to do everything to keep the blazers and follow Tom's Plan for that area.	Legislators and the city of pdx to clean up so others want to be there.	None...they have pretty much failed	Raleigh NC, Salt Lake City (growing sports and business hub.)	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Norman	97140	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Oregon's median high school graduate is semiliterate and struggles with basic numeracy. We cannot continue this way and expect to develop a skilled workforce. CTE programming is great--I support it--but you must pressure the State's school systems (and the entrenched interest groups that feed off of it) to improve results on basic reading, writing, and arithmetic. Funding might be a part of that solution, but the real problem is lack of accountability.	Adopt school choice and allow parents to take their students to better-performing private schools. Failing that, attack the unions head-on and implement real teacher/District performance accountability measures. Change State law to put some burden back onto parents, too--bring back truancy courts. Lengthen the school year.	Much better outcomes on statewide standardized tests.	Legislature, Governor, school boards, teacher's unions.	NA	Mississippi's "Miracle" is a place to start.	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Leslie Barbour	97702	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Arts and Culture. Unequal access to arts and culture between communities west of the Cascades and east of the Cascades. Lack of large performing arts centers east of the Cascades.	State support for building arts infrastructure, including on campuses, throughout Oregon. Create an Art Park in Central Oregon that would function as both a regional art center and a draw for visitors.	Arts programs in Oregon are linked together through a dedicated portal for both performers and patrons. Year-round Art Park located between Redmond and Bend. "The arts and cultural sector can improve – not merely reflect – the health of the broader economy. The arts offer economic diversification and can rapidly recover from economic downturns. The arts entice people out of their homes and back into community life – spending time with each other, spending their money with local merchants, and kick-starting the tourism industry. Research indicates that audiences are excited and eager to return to arts events." Arts and Economic Prosperity Study 6.	Governor, State Education Department, Oregon State Parks, arts organizations, Oregon Arts Commission, and local private or public landowners.	Oregon Arts Commission, Oregon Cultural Trust	Art Park in Lewiston, NY. Established in 1974 as a collaboration between New York State Parks and the nonprofit Artpark & Company, Artpark welcomes artists to enjoy and be inspired by the dramatic scenery and rich history of the Niagara River Gorge, and welcomes visitors and locals to enjoy the art and experiences created on its 150 acres. Over the decades, Artpark has hosted tens of thousands of groundbreaking visual artists, cutting-edge theater, dance and cirque arts performers, beloved bands and musicians representing a multitude of genres, festivals featuring local, national and international artists, poets and writers, and more, earning a worldwide reputation as a special place for people of all ages and walks of life to make and experience art. This living cultural legacy weaves into the area's history and present-day significance to Western New York's Indigenous population and the Niagara River and Gorge's extraordinary natural beauty, accessible to visitors through forested trails, sculpture gardens, and outdoor recreation areas. Artpark is all this and more. https://www.artpark.net/about-artpark	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Dave Edlund	97701	Both	Element 1 Corp	Private	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	SB1507 and other legislation passed in the current session and sent to Kotek are extremely anti-business. This practice must stop.	Repeal SB1507. Provide a favorable tax policy that supports and encourages small business growth. Interesting that the approximately $310 million SB1507 claims to bring to the state in new tax revenue is very close to the $375 million the state (legislature and governor) wants to "give" in the form of subsidies to an out-of-state billionaire and presumed new owner of the Trail Blazers. The hypocrisy is obvious and inexcusable.	Move Oregon into the top 10 best states when measured as business friendly.	Legislature and governor	None, thanks to the work from the current legislative session and anti-small-business agendas.	NA	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Rob Fandrey	97223	Organization/Business	Cache Valley Electric Company. A large regional electrical construction contractor.	Private	NA	Commercial Electrical Construction	101-500 people	Business climate	Business and High Income earner taxes and competitiveness of Oregon compared to other states.	In this time of economic uncertainty, Oregon needs to explain better to our voters the importance of where their tax money comes from and how important it is to balance our core values of Oregonians are in respect to our environment and humanitarian efforts against economic prosperity which is to say simply, we need to be able afford our values before they can be realized.	A better balanced effort from both sides of the isle. Oregon has never been more diverse in it's needs and opinions and our leadership NEEDS to reflect that.	As in private business, It always starts from the top down. We need change to balance our leadership to more accurately reflect all Oregonians. The narrative out of Salem is always about how to spend more money along with the fact there isn't enough. Very rarely is it about how to save more money.	I have a very hard time thinking of one that has been implemented and exceeded expectations and goals.	NA	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Richard Cook	97526	Both	[illegible]	Private	Technology	[illegible]	21-100 people	Tools for growth	I would like to see a lot more programs for companies based out of rural [illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	This is a multiple actor type thing with the state legislature working with local governments and eductional partners to get this rolling. The rural areas of the state suffer because people don't want to move them for jobs because of the state of the schools in the state, especially rural areas, and it seems like businesses that try to focus on building in Oregon are left behind because some big out of state company is	NA	NA	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Government agencies under Governors directive!	All divisions who represent small businesses and those who work with them!	NA	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	The legislature and governor need to be willing to anger local governments by reducing their power to tax, build a pro-business and pro-union/pro-worker coalition to advocate for comprehensive reform, and adequately fund the analysis necessary to defend moving to a new system.	Enterprise Zone is necessary but also out of date (and at real risk thanks to its connection to politically unpopular data centers)	Realistically large incentive packages to support companies moving here, real economic development leadership that centralizes more authority to make business attraction decisions	Yes	Tools for growth	NA	Site aggregation seems to be the greatest hurdle for us in the Metro region right now.	A revolving loan fund that is sufficiently capitalized to support site aggregation	Managing to pull together 3-4 sites of larger than 100 acres within the existing urban growth boundary	Legislature, Business Oregon, and local jurisdictions	Enterprise Zone is really all that's available to local govt's and its outdated and the benefits unfairly accrue to the state while the local govt's take a hit	I don't have anything to point to on this- I'm not sure how other states/regions have accomplished this on the timeline we're concerned with today (Research Triangle took 20+ years and we don't have that kind of time, for instance).	Yes
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	legislature, local governments, county	Not sure I'm aware of any	Sales tax	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Local and state government.	Grants that are presented by Prosper have been a huge help. There grants have allowed me to stay in the city.	No Idea	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Voters	None	Go to Republican states, watch and learn	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Legislature and local government	Enterprise Zones. Vertical Housing Development Zones.	Utah: Governor's Office of Economic Opportunity - Economic development Tax Increment Financing (EDTIF)	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Colleges, local and state government, industry and high schools working together to help our state's young men.	OregonSaves, Paid Leave Oregon, WIN	The governor of Maryland created a position on their staff to represent young male achievement in their policies. Regulatory reform and cutting the red tape to reduce the compliance burden on business Exposing students to more career readiness and training. Internships and job shadows.	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	State and local politicians.	They have none	The other states everyone is choosing over us: Texas and Florida	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	No
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	I am prioritizing leadership - governors office, federal delegation, senior party leaders, and mayor/exec levels in Portland. The rural areas cannot change these tides without you all getting on board with a new relationship to economic growth.	I like BizOR's incentives but they're too small, too limited a duration, and have too many hoops to jump through. Anything I have liked is a shadow of what it could be if the goals and intent of the effort were serious - but we seem to create lofty goals with pitiful attempts to implement at any scale. And we back off of them in 2-3 years or 1-2 leg cycles before we throw it out and try something else equally tepid.	Local economic development entities https://texasedc.org/assets/main/resources/library/tedc-guide-book-3rd-addition.pdf Special districts should be setup for a minimum of 20-30 years (urban renewal, any TIF district type) Create a deal closing fund at governor's level Look at Georgia's & Louisiana's talent/workforce alignment programs used to recruit global enterprise Look at Massachusette's state funding for bio-innovation. We are never going to compete with the pitiful job we are doing to support our higher ed and private R&D efforts.	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Changes need to start with state and local governments.	None!	Look at the rules and regulations of successful states like Texas and Florida. Those are the states businesses and people are moving to.	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Achieving this vision requires action from multiple interconnected stakeholders: Oregon Legislature and state agencies – to create and fund targeted food system infrastructure programs, reduce regulatory barriers, and coordinate oversight across departments like health, agriculture, and environment. Local governments and permitting authorities – to ensure zoning, permitting, and infrastructure support for new or expanded food processing facilities, including shared/co-manufacturing spaces. Employers / food manufacturers – to actively engage in scaling production, adopt new technologies, and collaborate with training programs to address workforce needs. Education and workforce development partners – community colleges, technical schools, and training programs need to build curricula for food processing technicians, maintenance staff, and food safety roles. Industry associations and economic development organizations – to provide technical assistance, share best practices, coordinate co-manufacturing networks, and advocate for policies that strengthen Oregon's food and beverage ecosystem. Collective action from these stakeholders is essential to	Several existing state programs and policies provide critical support for small and mid-sized food manufacturers in Oregon, and continued investment in these programs is essential: Business Oregon grants and loans – including the Oregon Investment Advantage, Small Business Development Fund, and other programs that support equipment purchases, facility upgrades, and infrastructure improvements. These programs help food manufacturers invest in growth while keeping production in-state. Workforce and technical training initiatives – such as programs run through the Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center and community colleges, which provide training in advanced manufacturing, food safety, and technical production skills. Economic development incentives for rural communities – programs that support value-added agricultural processing and regional job creation help retain agricultural wealth within the state. Industry support and export promotion – state-backed programs that help food manufacturers connect with regional and national markets, including collaboration with industry associations like the Oregon Specialty	https://agr.wa.gov/departments/business-and-marketing-support/small-farm/infrastructure-grant	Yes	Workforce	NA	The food manufacturing industry in Oregon faces a critical workforce bottleneck: a shortage of skilled technicians, maintenance specialists, and machine consultants needed to operate and maintain increasingly complex processing equipment. Findings from the Oregon Business Council Food & Beverage Task Force highlight that even when facilities and equipment are in place, a lack of trained technical staff prevents scaling production efficiently. This "skills gap" acts as a friction point for small and mid-sized food manufacturers, leading to downtime, delayed expansion, and sometimes outsourcing production out of state. Addressing this challenge is essential to ensure Oregon retains value-added manufacturing, supports rural economies, and grows a competitive food and beverage sector.	To address the workforce gap, Oregon should implement a comprehensive technical workforce development initiative for the food and beverage sector, focusing on: Repair and maintenance technicians who can keep processing lines running efficiently. Machine consultants and technical operators who ensure equipment is optimized and compliant with food safety standards. Apprenticeships, certificate programs, and partnerships with community colleges and vocational schools, tailored to food manufacturing. This initiative should be paired with targeted infrastructure investment, modeled on Washington State's Local Food System Infrastructure Grant, so manufacturers can scale production with confidence that skilled staff are available to maintain and operate equipment. Additionally, reducing regulatory friction for technical training and certification would make it easier for Oregon companies to develop and retain a highly skilled technical workforce.	Success in 2–3 years would be evident in several ways: A growing pipeline of skilled technical workers, including repair and maintenance technicians, machine consultants, and food processing operators. Reduced downtime and more efficient production across small and mid-sized food manufacturing facilities. Operational apprenticeship and certification programs at community colleges and vocational schools, providing clear career pathways in food manufacturing. A strengthened food manufacturing ecosystem where companies can scale production confidently, knowing that technical expertise is available in-state, keeping jobs and value-added manufacturing in Oregon.	Developing this workforce requires collaboration among: State legislature and agencies – fund training programs, coordinate certification pathways, and reduce regulatory barriers. Education and workforce partners – community colleges, technical schools, and vocational programs to design and deliver curriculum for technical roles. Employers / food manufacturers – provide apprenticeship placements, identify workforce needs, and partner with educators. Industry associations and economic development organizations – facilitate partnerships, promote training programs, and advocate for technical workforce support.	Key programs that provide a foundation for workforce development in food manufacturing include: Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center (OMIC) – supports technical training, apprenticeships, and applied manufacturing research. Business Oregon workforce grants and incentive programs – help manufacturers invest in employee training and recruitment. Community college and vocational programs – offer training in manufacturing, mechanical maintenance, and food safety, though more food-specific technical programs are needed. Continuing and expanding these programs to focus on repair and maintenance technicians, machine consulting, and other critical technical roles would directly address the workforce bottlenecks limiting Oregon's food manufacturing growth. These programs need to expand to include food manufacturing. Currently they are focused on large scale commerical manufacturing jobs.	https://agr.wa.gov/departments/business-and-marketing-support/small-farm/infrastructure-grant	No
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	The entire Goverment needs to be cleaned out. Our constitutional rights are being infringed upon. Goverment does not value the people voice. The only concern Goverment has is helping criminals, illegals, and homelessness, yet they aren't getting help either	There are none! There is nothing in place to help the middle class or small business owner. Working families are starving and the government wants to tax us more, don't you wonder why people and businesses are leaving? It's pretty simple	Lower taxes	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Politicians	None	Less regulation and less taxes. Make businesses want to do business here. The mass exodus of businesses and jobs is your own doing.	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Legislators, local governments	None	Look at any red state	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	State government and OHA	Parity act	Stop restricting associates from working for private practices. Too many changes quickly with OHA	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Public voting without Main in Voting. SAVE Act!	None. Too much government taxation, fees and regulations.	Texas, Florida, Tennessee.	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	State agency leadership and the Governor's leadership to find solutions for stalled development.	Regional Solutions program	Fast track models that bring all agencies together with a developer early in the process and look to find ways to get to "yes"	Yes	Tools for growth	NA	Infrastructure funding	Partnerships with rural communities on wastewater treatment	More wastewater treatment facilities and expansion	Legislature and local governments	Business Oregon Special Public Works Fund and IFA	NA	No
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Everyone	No more tina	Not having tina	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	No
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Government looking at some tax help for small businesses and providing more support with their systems and navigating which place we are supposed to file and pay things.	Not really sure. Right now very frustrated with the Oregon government taxing its people to death.	Lower taxes .	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	You, Tina — you have to be accountable.	You just keep coming up with more fun ways to flush taxpayers' money, huh??	Idaho — look to them. Cut taxes and get out of small business's way!	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

Curt Dooley	97524	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Taxation	[illegible]
June Saragosa	97224	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Ashley Almon	97302	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	I don't know	[illegible]
Timothy	97471	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Casey Nielsen	97420	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dwight Elder	97405	Both	Design build company	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Steven Poor	97055	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Crippling taxes	[illegible]
Leigh Jensen	97132	Organization/Business	Visit Newberg, a Destination Marketing Organization	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Marketing - Tourism	1 - 20 people	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Nancy Roach	97031	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Housing	[illegible]
David Brown	97306	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Taylor Rembowski	97918	Both	Malheur County economic development	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	I don't know	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Faith Dionne	97015	Organization/Business	Dappled Tonic	Private	Food and Beverage	Manufacturing and sale of canned tonic water	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Willard Burks	97404	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
DOUG BAKER	97031	Organization/Business	Big River Community Land Trust	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Affordable Housing	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Affordable housing	[illegible]
Shaun Hyland	97477	Both	John Hyland Construction	Private	Business and Professional Services	Construction	21-100 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Craig	97720	Both	Fuel and propane distribution - Energy	Private	NA	Energy	101-500 people	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Megan Fehrman	97530	Organization/Business	A Greater Applegate (also known as the Greater Applegate Community Development Corporation)	Non-profit	NA	Rural community building, economic vitality, and social resilience	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Lucilla Valley	97301	Organization/Business	Bridgeway community Health	Non-profit	NA	Healthcare	101-500 people	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Jay Riley	97341	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Jessica Howard	97305	Organization/Business	Chemeketa Community College	Public	NA	Education	1000+ people	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Aaron Ensign	97002	Both	Ensign Investment	Private	NA	Real Estate / Investment	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Kirk Olsen	97201	Organization/Business	Commercial real estate development	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Dennis Hodge	97217	Both	CertaPro Painters of Portland	Private	NA	Construction	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Jaci Wilson	97007	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
John DiLorenzo	97201	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
JENNIFER DENISE POSNER	97221	Both	Accounting company	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Bethanye Barkus	97203	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	traffic congestion, air pollution	[illegible]
Steve Pedery	97217	Organization/Business	Oregon Wild	Non-profit	NA	Conserving Oregon's wildlands, wildlife, and waters.	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Matthew Carter	97213	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Michelle Eyres	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Lack of remote work opportunities.	[illegible]
Cara Turano	97212	Both	Oregon Entrepreneurs Network	Non-profit	NA	Industry agnostic	1 - 20 people	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
James Wagner	97389	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Primary level education	[illegible]
Doug Freeman	97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Rex Lesueur	97739	Both	Sunriver - La Pine Ecumenic Development Group	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	I don't know	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Sean Skipper	97322	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Land use and permitting	[illegible]
Windol Cador cador	97223	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
GERALD Miles HUBBARD	97128	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Madi Shick	97006	Both	Beaverton School District	Public	Business and Professional Services	Education	500-1000 people	Workforce	[illegible]	[illegible]
Andrea Myhill	97009	Both	Best Western Plus Columbia River Inn	Public	NA	Hospitality	21-100 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]
Clark Zeller	97223	Both	Applied Construction Group - Cloudchaser Investments - Kirby Nagelhout Construction	Private	NA	Construction and Real Estate Development	101-500 people	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Alex Palm	97470	Both	i.e. Engineering, Inc.	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	21-100 people	Tools for growth	[illegible]	[illegible]

Elaine Stewart	97225	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Carl Smith	97071	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	
Russell Hoeflich	97266	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	
Jeffrey Bivens	97070	Both	Residential construction	Private	NA	Construction	101-500 people	Business climate	
Rob Harris	97124	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	
Peter Kenagy	97321	Both	We are a diversified small family farm , currently operated by 3rd and 4th generations.	Private	Forestry and Wood Products	Production agriculture	1 - 20 people	NA	
Tania Neubauer	97231	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Christopher Foster	97231	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Elisabeth Blizzard	97007	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Steve culley	97814	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Housing
Ann Stapleton	97405	Both	Pull Together Consulting	Private	NA	Strategy, Organizational Design, Operations	1 - 20 people	Business climate	
Larry Duyck	97133	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Joseph Stenger	97211	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Jennifer Watkins	97814	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	
Daniel K Varcoe	97739	Both	Palmers Pump Service	Private	Business and Professional Services	Water/Well/Pump Service	1 - 20 people	Business climate	
Matt Swafford	97703	Both	St. Charles Health System	Non-profit	NA	Health System	1000+ people	Business climate	
Elena Barreto	97201	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	NA
Elena Barreto	97201	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	
Jon Davies	97031	Both	Columbia River Insurance	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	
Chris Damgen	97217	Both	Port of Portland	Public	NA	Public Agency / Trade & Economic Development	500-1000 people	Tools for growth	
Malcolm McIver	97204	Both	Commerce Properties	Private	NA	Real Estate Investment and Management	21-100 people	Business climate	
Jeff Baker	97702	Organization/Business	Craft3	Public	Business and Professional Services	Finance	21-100 people	Tools for growth	
Jason Chupp	97209	Both	Swinerton	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	101-500 people	Business climate	
Hannah K Kullberg	97381	Both	PNW Packaged Food & Beverage Group	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	
Ryan Werner	97034	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	
Tim Terich	97035	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	
Michelle Schulz	97209	Organization/Business	GBD Architects Inc.	Private	Business and Professional Services	Architect	21-100 people	Business climate	
Jody Belsick	97204	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	
Kimberly Vagner	97124	Organization/Business	Rice NW Museum of Rocks and Minerals	Non-profit	NA	Museums & Cultural Institutions	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	
Christopher Sutton	97119	Both	Carpet MD inc.	Public	NA	Commercial and residential cleaning	1 - 20 people	Business climate	
Jon Legarza	97070	Both	HSC-Healthy Sustainable Communities: Cities, Counties we provide economic development support to in the Pacific NW.	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	
Don Paumier	97753	Both	Paumier Strategic Solutions	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	
Kevin Johnson	97124	Both	Dion Vineyard	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	
Aron Carleson	97124	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Dan Huff	97038	Both	City of Molalla	Public	NA	Municipal Government	21-100 people	Business climate	
Khrys Jones	97055	Organization/Business	Sandy Area Chamber of Commerce	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	
NA	97123	Organization/Business	NA	Public	NA	Agriculture	1 - 20 people	Business climate	
Gabriela Frask	97203	Organization/Business	f	Private	Metals and Machinery	f	101-500 people	Business climate	f
NA	97225	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	
Tyler Geel	97123	Organization/Business	Insomnia Coffee Company	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	101-500 people	Business climate	
Mark Spiegelberg	98664	Both	Spiegs Barbers, LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	

[illegible]	[illegible]	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
[illegible]	[illegible]	Both	[illegible]	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	[illegible]	Business climate	[illegible]	[illegible]
Steve Krautscheid	97007	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Somehow stimulate support of small businesses, the backbones of our community. Many are disadvantaged, particularly to fewer visits related to ICE concerns.	Small business grants to help stimulate growth. Not to pay for staff but to do things that will expand their business.
Catherine Ciarlo	97214	Both	Metro	Public	NA	Government - planning and development	21-100 people	Tools for growth	Comprehensive, transparent review of barriers to job creation and industrial development. Land availability is one challenge and needs to be addressed - but if we let it eclipse other barriers (e.g. permitting timelines, workforce availability and training, state tax structure) we are unlikely to unlock development. And if we focus exclusively on land use we run the risk of undermining several of Oregon's important strengths without actually solving the problem we are chasing.	A series of facilitated conversations about how statewide growth management laws and policy should evolve to meet current needs. These conversations should be grounded in data and set the stage to move beyond "talking point" arguments (whether pro or con) with respect to the current system.
John Sweet	97420	Both	Coos County	Public	NA	County Government	101-500 people	Business climate	Over-regulation, business unfriendly tax policies, seemingly endless legal appeals	Reduce regulation, revise tax policies, restrict appeals
barbara Snyder	97411	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	There is no economic direction in the state. There should be incentives for the desired economic drivers. Right now, there are only disincentives.	The last economic development plan was in 2005. Arizona has a robust economic plan and they have developed in those areas that they desired. They used to be mostly a construction economy --- Oregon needs to look at other states that are succeeding in economic development in terms of creating a business environment for the desired business clusters. For example -- healthcare is supposed to be universal access here but healthcare is not succeeding in Oregon. Oregon does not have a plan.
Jennifer Wakayama	97015	Both	I am a broker (400+clients) and business owner of a mfg business in Portland in the construction space.	Private	Business and Professional Services	Construction	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Oregon is falling behind, states are recruiting/targeting our employers with success. Who are we recruiting TO our wonderful State? Oregon is competing for talent, talent is moving out of our State as is our youth. Construction is way down and opportunities aren't presenting themselves to our under 26 demographic; they are moving to neighboring states-Idaho, AZ and Tx; even Vancouver WA is getting in on the action.	Attract and retain the talent out of OSU and UofO. Capitalize on the footwear, womens sports, athletic/footwear industries attracting more vendors that support that ecostructure. Reduce the time and $$ needed to permit a project! This is a no brainer, this is a revenue generating department? Make Oregon a business friendly state; quite prioritizing the $$ you get from Feds on homeless; that cycle is over.
Firiel Severns	97322	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Making Oregon a more accessible place for people to do business, instead of moving their business out of the state .	Incentives and making it an easier process. As a former employee of a Chamber of Commerce, I heard over and over form business owners how difficult it is to do business in Oregon. Business is the backbone of our communities. We need businesses to provide jobs, to support non-profits that are trying to solve social issues, and pay taxes which helps with everything else.
Gary Mortensen	97114	Both	Stoller Wine Group	Private	Food and Beverage	Wineries & Vineyards	101-500 people	Business climate	There seem to be a big disinterest on the Oregon wine industry coming out of Salem recently, exemplified by the recent anti-alcohol messaging from the OHA, land use and taxation, ag overtime and most egregiously the new EPR. Previous administrations have always felt supportive to our industry, championing it with pride. This administration does not. I worry that personal interests are taking priority over what is key economic driver for this state.	Putting personal favorites who do not have the deep experience or strategic insight to help champion our entire industry only reinforces the perception that our real-world challenges are not being taken seriously.
Domonic Biggi	97210	Organization/Business	Beaverton Foods, Inc.	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	101-500 people	Business climate	Taxes that are levied and don't actually solve the stated purposes	Would set standards. Publish accountability measures and practices. Establish non-partisan private oversight boards
Laura Butner	97321	Both	TMI Lending, LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	Private Money Loans	1 - 20 people	Business climate	More regulation and ambiguity in the laws than any other State	Less government interference
Erik Adair	97140	Both	City of Sherwood	Public	NA	government	101-500 people	Business climate	Welcoming state, move up dramatically in rankings. New branding marketing strategy "wide open for business" expand industrial site readiness to 100m then 200m then 300m annually. More FDI outreach and marketing, give Business Oregon more money and tools. Without these things, there will be continued loss of jobs and prosperity and doom loop with less jobs to fund Oregon general fund.	What I said above, make a serious investment in Industrial Site Readiness fund. Honestly $40m will not do a single thing to move the needle. And get serious on cash or abatement incentives and give cities more options and tools. Expand Enterprise zone census track elegibility to include MORE cities, not just less income communities as sometimes companies don't want to locate to these areas for worker base, schools, etc. We have no ability to get an enterprise zone in Sherwood despite having some of the best industrial land and over 2 million sq feet of flex industrial space available NOW! . Look to Texas and other succesful states and get bold and creative on how you market, sell, recruit and incentivize companies. Payroll tax holidays, no tax on profits for first 5 years, whatever it is we are losing, and losing big. Trust me if we don't do something now we are basically doomed as a state economically. This is nearly dire straights now. Further invest in Chip and Semi funding for expansion.
Rick Osborn	97420	Both	Blue Ridge Strategies Oregon Coast Visitors Association Pacific Coast Intermodal Port	Private	Business and Professional Services	Public Affairs	1 - 20 people	Business climate	We absolutely need two fundamental attitude changes in this state. 1. We need to be focusing more on projects around the state that spur economic development, such as the Pacific Coast Intermodal Port. We can have major shipping developments in Portland AND Coos Bay while continuing to maintain our traditional fishing ports on the coast. Every region needs to be supported in developing their economies. 2. A fundamental climate change is needed at the agency level, especially with DLCD, DEQ and others. Instead of moving the goalpost and finding reasons and ways to kill projects, they should be working hard to find ways to get to YES in responsible ways consistent with the values of our state and the communities where projects are located. That second part is key, because there are a lot of projects in rural communities that get killed based on urban values and input rather than listening to the communities. Streamlining is wonderful, but there needs to be a different thought process, too.	I would like to see the PCIP project used as a pilot project for process streamlining. I'd like to see a more open ear to development in rural communities. We aren't looking to build a bunch more Portlands out here. We're looking for strong communities where we can chart our own course.
Jennifer DiBello	97007	Both	The Arc Oregon	Non-profit	NA	None of these.	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Oregon's budget.	Stop cutting educational budgets especially for the developmental disabled and learning disabled
Chris Sumpter	97420	Both	Outer Limits Construction	Private	Forestry and Wood Products	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Reduce the governmental influence on the private sector. Stop handing money out to welfare/non-working individuals.	Eliminate our Liberal leadership!
Chuck Sheketoff	97381	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The biggest barriers are we no longer have a K-life education system that was a factor for Intel coming to Oregon, and our education system is the key to prosperity - from attracting workers to maintaining workers to fueling innovation, education is key. For instance, businesses of all sizes need employees who don't have worries about quality child care and affordability of child care. We need workforce training so more people can earn better wages. We need investments in housing so housing becomes affordable; today businesses don't want to move to an area where their employees can't afford to live. And the biggest friction point is the business community's never ending push to lower taxes and get tax subsidies - taking the low road to economic development.	Put a price on all the tax giveaways and focus instead on addressing the non-tax issues where there is probably some consensus - investing more in higher ed, investing more in affordable housing, investing more in early childhood education, investing more in high school CTC programs, community college workforce programs, and higher ed programs.
Justin Douglas	97030	Organization/Business	City of Gresham	Public	NA	Local government	500-1000 people	Business climate	The blurb above states the problem at hand - the state does NOT provide a predictable and competitive environment for employers through practical policies related to regulation, permitting, and taxation. There's a lot to untangle here and the biggest challenge isn't called out directly in the blurb. The state and governor simply do not have the financial tools to support business recruitment, retention and expansion. Clarity, consistency, and certainty around state regulations would also go a long way (and actually don't cost money!).	Triple the amount of the Strategic Reserve Fund, but with more predictable criteria and less discretionary decision-making.
James Jones	97202	Both	Bullseye Glass Co.	Private	Metals and Machinery	NA	101-500 people	Business climate	Oregon's new Climate Protection Program. It is the most expensive in the world.	Exclude all companies with Green House Gas emissions under 5,000 MTCO2e. Allow exclusions for companies using BAT (Best Available Technology) in their industry. Collected funds should go toward reducing GHG emissions exclusively. Funneling funds to non-profits to be used for environmental justice is not a good use of those funds.
Dana Siebert	97405	Both	Onward Eugene	Non-profit	NA	economic development	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Change the law that requires prevailing wage on development projects. BOLI set this ruling in place in 2007 and it has not been adjusted since.	Either drop the requirement all together. Make exemptions for housing and strategic community projects. Change what triggers prevailing wage (better define what triggers). and/or raise the the threshold from $750k to a much larger amount.
Ron Loewen	97374	Both	Best Heating	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Land use, and building code, and a state that taxes us at the highest rates and is not provide any redundancy in power production roadways that are not properly maintained and criminals, not held accountable for the crimes they commit.	Remove vote by mail, prosecute. The Democrats that received stolen money for their campaign . Stop spending money on illegal aliens.
Chris West	97224	Both	PacWest Resources	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Investment dollars, other states are more inviting...	Culture change, start saying yes, instead of maybe or no...
Beth Klingner	97124	Both	Dion Vineyard - a wine grape vineyard and small production winery	Private	Food and Beverage	Agriculture	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Too many regulations and rules - we are sure we are out of compliance _somewhere_ but we try to meet every rule we know about, and I am sure we are missing one somewhere. It's impossible to keep track.	Please provide a simple website with all the compliance, rules, permits, and regulations for a business to operate in Oregon. (I know, this is a herculean task, and it should NOT be!)
Heather Fay Ficht	97701	Both	East Cascades Works, the local workforce development board serving 10 counties east of the cascades mountain range.	Non-profit	NA	Non-profit workforce	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Continued year over year reductions in funding from the Federal govt and lack of investment from the state, despite the investments generating new revenue through personal income taxes.	Reallocate dispersed state workforce funds that are unaligned and duplicative to support a cohesive and strategic regional approach that leverages Federal investments and local infrastructure. Local Workforce Boards are led by local businesses and should be empowered to address local needs, not a generic mandate from Salem or state agencies that are not in tune to needs and local resources.
Lee Schrepel	97148	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The Governor & super-majority party, thus the State of Oregon, has a bias against business & employers in the state. The State is over-regulated & over-taxed. This is not just a perception; it is a reality. This has persisted through the multiple governors as Oregon became a state of 'big government' & with an attitude of enforcement.	Simplify & reduce regulation & taxation. Reduce risk & vulnerability of being an employer & business owner. Reduce focus upon technology & support natural resource-based industries such as ag, forestry & fisheries. Stop the race to pave over the Willamette Valley because "they're not making more good farmland"! Stop the tax incentives to attract big technology. Nurture & appreciate small businesses. Support the OSU Extension Service & education in the "trades" & management of small business.
Andrea O'Neil	97067	Organization/Business	Klobas O'Neil Roofing Co. Inc	Private	NA	construction	1 - 20 people	Business climate	taxes, fees, overhead, employees (people can't afford to live here so they are moving. We are considering this for our family)	cost for people that live here and run businesses here has to change or nothing that we do makes a difference.
Al Stephens	97333	Organization/Business	HVAC Contractor	Private	Business and Professional Services	Heating & Air Conditioning	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Payroll and payroll taxes	Wages have gone up, taxes have gone up, our prices have gone up. It's all relative and raising minimum wage didn't help anyone out of poverty
Dale Moon	97478	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	The current funding model for community colleges presents a significant barrier to effectively training workers in high-demand fields. In order to successfully equip students with the skills necessary for careers in areas such as welding, machine tool technology, and mechatronics, community colleges require adequate financial resources. These institutions must be able to offer competitive salaries to attract and retain qualified faculty in these specialized fields, where compensation levels are often significantly higher than what community colleges can provide. Enhanced funding mechanisms are essential to ensure that community colleges can fulfill their critical role in workforce development.	In order to enhance educational funding and support workforce development, it is essential to reform the existing funding formula. This can involve reallocating financial resources away from detrimental cuts in education. Additionally, consideration should be given to transferring a portion of corporate tax revenues to community colleges, thereby enabling these institutions to effectively train and develop a skilled workforce.
Randal Flaming	97361	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The biggest hurdles for business is governmental regulation/restrictions and excessive taxes. We need to simply things and make it easier and more profitable for business in this state.	Lower the tax rate on businesses and repeal all sorts of detrimental regulations.
Lora Monroe	97338	Both	Lora Michele Entertainment LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	The cost of hiring employees is a big deterrent to hiring help. The cost of everything makes growth very challenging. Even just the cost of getting repairs on the building let alone making upgrades. What I need to charge people for services and still make a profit is moving towards unsustainable for the economy.	Less government regulation and taxation. The more rules and oversight administered the more cost and burden there is on business owners. I'd say lower or get rid of minimum wage, but I know that is incredibly unlikely. The way things are now forces small businesses to stay small and only the big corporate businesses can afford to stay in business, if they even choose to do business in Oregon at all. The cost of food has made restaurants have to significantly raise their prices which is also unsustainable.
Daniel Cicerchi	97062	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Minimal hands-on experience mixed with theoretical explorations in public education systems	Adjust K-12 (and maybe university/colleges) curriculum to include real-world experiences to educate and train for beyond schooling. Some real-world examples include cooking, carpentry, plumbing, accounting, sewing, logistics, etc.
Derek R Gerber	97132	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Raising taxes on everything.	Stop tax hikes.
Deborah Smith	97128	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	The quality and cost of education is failing our kid's and future employees. Stop the DEI, sexualization, and indoctrination. Remove all illegal immigrants from schools. Teach reading, writing, including cursive, history, civics, english, and other job forward classes like schools used to due, like woodshop, construction, art, pottery, dance, jewelry making, future farmers, sports.	Follow federal laws and regulations, honor American citizens constitutional rights and stop constantly trying to take them away! Reduce taxes, regulations, reduce government workforce massively, shift jobs to private businesses. Government interference in the ability of business to grow has caused quality workers to leave the state. This should change.
Philip Higgins	97132	Both	Pacific Crest Real Estate Advisors	Private	Business and Professional Services	Commercial Real Estate Brokerage & Development	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Preponderance of duplicative regulations, and quite frankly the poor attitudes of agency personnel	Comprehensive Regulatory Audit and concentrate the intended goal / outcome into one simplified process with one Agency in charge.
Jerry Moen	97128	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The cost of doing business with taxes, fees, and misappropriation of some costs.	Cut tax & fee rates and reverse the decision to steal lodging taxes for use in the general budget.

Jack Morganthaler	97375	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The business climate is fine. This idea that Oregon is somehow problematic for business is a fallacy pushed by people like Tim Boyle who only want tax breaks.
Gary Baune	97338	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The state has created a hostile environment for business, including extremely high taxes, allowing the homeless to run rampant and restrictions on expansion
Catherine Caudle	97756	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Wholesale goods can not compete in this environment. Wholesalers take the brunt of the raw costs and have the smallest profit margin. They are the weather bell the state should interact with rather than wait for the retailer to close down.
NA	97338	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	taxes, regulations about everything. Other states have higher rates of "prosperity" with lower tax rates and populations.
NA	97219	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	To attract new business, we need to invest in livable family friendly areas within Portland. We are allowing our most basic civic responsibilities: lights, safety and cleanliness, to go by the wayside for the sake of investing in 20+ year plans or the next exciting event. People and Businesses move to areas where there is foot traffic, where people want to connect and do business together in clean and safe spaces. This is the baseline for any and all future investments. Clean streets, investments in parks and in maintains safe infrastructure that crosses visible corridors. New Business will not invest in renting a space that is empty or devoid of foot traffic and activity. And I do not recommend investing in more "temporary activations", we need to just go back to basics. Clean the streets daily, ensure lighting is a priority for night time businesses, invest in security and neighborhood watch programs that will enforce safe streets. Stop trying to ask big business to come to our rescue. Also, pot holes, it is the first sign of a failing city.
Ruppert Reinstadler	97224	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The tax structure for individuals and businesses in Oregon is punitive. Why would anyone locate or expand a business in Oregon. this will eventually lead to a huge hole in the state coffers because of the loss of their tax income.
Sydney Hatch	97338	Both	My retired husband owned various highway construction firms licensed to work in 8 western states.	Private	Metals and Machinery	Highway construction & specialty paving & utilities installations	21-100 people	Business climate	Requirements that only Union contractors can work on state funded construction projects thereby raising costs 18-20%.
Greg Erwin	97401	Both	Sapient Private Wealth Management	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Taxes and regulations designed to disincentivize businesses from coming to Oregon and or staying in the state.
Kit Johnston	97114	Both	Kit Johnston Farms	Private	NA	Agriculture	21-100 people	Business climate	Continued tax increases or addition of new taxes on business and residents.
Mark Cleve	97229	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Taxes causing business and wealthy to leave the City of Portland, the tri-county area and eventually the state. Look at the population change since 2020. The majority of the people who left the state lived in Multnomah County.
Erin Doyle	97008	Both	Pride Beaverton	Non-profit	NA	Entertainment, Community Outreach	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Aid for small non-profits and new businesses. The biggest barrier is funding for a non-profit centered around creating LGBTQ+ events for the community.
Jay Price	97128	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	We have a terrible business climate. Portland is a terrible place to do business as it is anti-business. You need to work to change the culture, cut taxes and cut regulations.
Michelle Zielinski	97303	Both	Small family run u-pick farm with fruits and vegetables, I also work as an agronomist for a crop protection and fertilizer supplier and work closley with the hazelnut industry, vegetable industry and Oregon State University research centers	Private	NA	Agriculture	1 - 20 people	Business climate	The cost to do business in Oregon is one of the highest, it prevents business from being able to compete on a global and regional market. The laws being passed are out of touch with the reality of running a business and the needs of the businesses. We are making oregon a lawyers dream environment where business owners no longer feel safe to have employees in Oregon.
Michelle Knoke	97005	Organization/Business	Westside Transportation Alliance	Non-profit	NA	Transportation	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	A key challenge is increasing the use of transportation options among commuters in Washington County. The biggest barrier is the continued reduction in transportation funding that supports public transit and other alternatives to driving alone, including safe and connected bike and pedestrian infrastructure. These funding gaps make it harder for commuters to rely on options that are affordable, convenient, and reliable.
Todd Duwe	97007	Both	Perlo Construction	Private	Business and Professional Services	Commercial Construction	101-500 people	Business climate	1. Limited sizable industrial land availability. 2. Misinformation from anti-growth groups. 3. High taxes
Stacie Fritz	97702	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	How to start the conversations. Seems as though there is a firm understanding surrounding various needs throughout every Community. A desire to do it right and to meet what's best for us.
Joanna Gough	97086	Both	Pulse Impact Ventures	Private	Technology	VC	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Talent Development and training sessions are not in relation to what's happening in 2026. A lot of the programs in the city, private or public are old ways.
Stewart Peterson	97035	Both	Macadam Forbes	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	21-100 people	Tools for growth	Western Oregon does not have "shovel ready" Industrial land. What land is available is burdened by untenable conditions with heavy handed zoning, regulation and intolerable permitting processes
Kelly Fukai	97045	Organization/Business	Northwest Gas Association	Non-profit	NA	Utilities/Energy	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Affordable and reliable energy
Heather DeSart	97367	Both	Northwest Oregon Works	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Local Workforce Development Board	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Sustained and reliable funding to meet the needs of job-seekers and businesses.
Dean Hogan	97133	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Taxes are the biggest barrier. Too many created taxes over the last few years. Ie, CAT Tax, Metro Tax, Oregon Paid Leave tax (partially funded by the business) that directly impact businesses. Not to mention the fact that the state is looking to add new ones (transportation bill).
Carl Sundberg	97005	Both	Stonemonk Media	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Safety from hostile federal immigration forces kidnapping and terrorizing oregon businesses and workers.
Karen Bolin	97123	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Too many taxes on business. Ask the businesses that have closed in the last 3 months to complete a survey or some kind of "exit" form to get data on what is not working for them to stay open.
Christina Aleckson	97005	Both	Single Point Financial Advisors, Inc.	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Tax code. We need to reconsider how taxes are structured and the impact on the businesses and therefore the workforce and community.
Sara Stephens	97420	Both	Southwestern Oregon Workforce Investment Board	Non-profit	NA	Workforce Development	21-100 people	Workforce	Local workforce boards federal workforce and innovation act funding has been on a steady decline for the past decade. Local workforce boards are innovative and responsive and have proven to be good stewards of funding to get people into training and into higher-paying jobs than they previously held.
Kyle Stevens	97420	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Delays to doing business in OR. Permitting, Land Use, Complex systems.
jay Bloom	97212	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Focus on why someone should come or stay in Oregon. It is a belonging question. Will whatever my diversity is will I or my family belong; will my contributions be welcomed and if I have difficulty sharing my contributions will I find support from others for making them. Will I find community or is this a place you are entirely on your own.
Todd Gooding	97204	Both	SKB	Private	NA	Commercial Real estate	21-100 people	Business climate	Lack of available industrial land
Tracy Meese	97330	Organization/Business	Corvallis Chamber of Commerce	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Workforce Housing, Economic Infrastructure, Permitting & Regulatory Predictability, Regional Innovation, Downtown Revitalization Tools, Business Competitiveness/Tools to Draw Businesses
M. Glow	97116	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Requirements for infrastructure improvements for new or redevelopments of industrial areas are cost prohibitive in the initial phases of development. I've seen many great projects killed by City Engineers over-requiring improvements.
Joshua Clark	97477	Both	Willamette Valley Dermatology	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Healthcare costs are outrageous, premiums keep going up and coverage keep going down.
Theodore Seeber	97005	Organization/Business	INFORMATION-R-US	Private	Technology	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	For businesses earning under $300,000/year, we need to provide maximum support
Chantelle Meyer	97439	Organization/Business	City of Florence, OR	Public	NA	Government	21-100 people	Business climate	Businesses leave Oregon because of our over-regulated environment. When trying to attract or retain businesses, we are faced with demands for incentives, which are often used from our limited tax dollars. Industrial lands programs specifically target metro areas while rural areas have industrial lands and a lot of the infrastructure needed. The cost of doing business can be too high; why are we pricing people out of the very thing that makes up our economy? I have also heard that our income tax rate ranks us in the top 10 of all the states ... but our cost of living is also high, and wages are lower than some of the other states on that list.
Noah Greenwald	97211	Both	Wildlife Prosperity	Non-profit	Bioscience	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	One of Oregon's greatest assets is the beauty and diversity of its natural environment, but there are many threats, including pollution, invasive species and industrial and agricultural sprawl.

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Karen Anderson	97396	Both	Navarra Gardens a Wedding Venue and Corporate Retreat	Private	NA	Hospitality & Rentals	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Land use, taxes and lack of awareness of small business challenges, especially seasonal businesses
Chris Carney	97222	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	I feel our greatest barrier is the radical left and right agendas that discount the benefit of compromise, which limits growth.
Gus Meyer	97141	Organization/Business	FACT: Fishermans Advisory Committee.	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	New (Re newed) Ocean Seafood (Shirmp) Fishery, Processing, Marketing, and Transportation System.
Suzanne Hanifin	97219	Both	Acumen Executive Search	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	The biggest problem of being a small business is the taxes along with the lack of support.
Dwight Adkins	97206	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	Oregon feels like a spider web. We continue to add rules, regulations, hurdles, requirements, processes, fees, panels, and committees which in turn makes everything more difficult. What we believe to be helpful in actuality makes things harder. The Oregon spiderweb is suffocating business, families, job growth and quality of life.
Richard Pine	97308	Both	O'Neill Pine Company	Private	Forestry and Wood Products	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Instead of being honored as employers businesses are too often seen as only a tax revenue source. Seek revenue for public good from the broadest possible range of taxpayers, not the narrowest.
Ted Ferry	97301	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Taxes and Government Regs
Kevin Harding	97321	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Climate Protection Program (CPP)
Alicia Bermes	97005-1693	Organization/Business	Beaverton Area Chamber of Commerce	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Taxes keep going up and our small businesses cannot afford this.
Tom Engel	97008	Organization/Business	Vantage Point HR	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Administrative weight of being an employer - complying with rules, new laws, regulations and reporting.
James Hepler	97301	Both	Azimuth Surveying	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Poorly prepared employees and land surveying licensees
BARBARA FLEMING	97701	Both	CLS Fabrication, Inc.	Private	Metals and Machinery	We manufacture metal cabinets amd ship all over the USA	21-100 people	Business climate	The massive increase in business taxes in the last 5 years.
Tim Elder	97520	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Oregon is still trying to fill the holes left from the decline in the resource extraction economy. Reduced timber harvest, over fishing, mineral extraction generally only benefits a few and causes harm to many (tragedy of the commons).
Nick Williams	97304	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The overarching theme is the public sectors disdain for the private sector in Oregon. There's an adversarial relationship that has developed as State and local policies have compounded over the decades. Additionally, those employed by government agencies aren't empowered to make decisions - so simple tasks take far too long, frustrating those in business to the point that they're seeking other states to do business in.
Don McBride	97303	Both	SMI Real Estate & Property Management	Private	Business and Professional Services	Real Estate & Property Management	21-100 people	Business climate	Excessive regulation on property owners rights. Let the market decide how much rent should be increased, not the government. Due to excess inventory the market has had to reduce rents over the last few months which affects the property's total value. With rent control as the market rebounds property owners will not be allowed to catch up and property values will be negatively impacted. Lower property values result in a lower tax base.
Tim Bergler	97202	Both	Percipio Consulting Group, inc.	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	Taxes for small business owners and regulations/protections that make it difficult to do business. There are numerous examples where law makers did not consult tax payers or business owners when adding new special purpose taxes. Examples include - CAT tax, PSA tax, SHS tax. And most recently the example is SB 1507 which eliminates recent advantages of Federal taxes. Why would anyone locate a business here and take the risk to grow a business here when you pay considerably more taxes than other states? Oregon is one of the least attractive places to start and grow a business. There is no inherent advantage other than the natural beauty - and there are a lot of beautiful places in the world. Our schools are sub-par. Our public safety is below average and now Portland is filled with homelessness and garbage. You cant overtax relative to other states and then match that with poor livability. Oregon still has not learned its lesson - as is evident by SB1507.
Brock Nation	97070	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Tools for growth	a
TRACI RAY	97204	Organization/Business	BARRAN LIEBMAN LLP	Private	Business and Professional Services	Law Firm	21-100 people	Business climate	Business friendliness, excess of taxes, inadequate support for downtown businesses
Daniel Birch	97223	Both	The WaitStaff Team Inc	Private	Business and Professional Services	Staffing & event rentals	21-100 people	Business climate	Too many "event based" businesses in Oregon operate with "independent contractors" that are miss-classified and it creates huge issues with real companies that are abiding by the law and employing staff yet paying higher amounts with less profits due to the other companies in the area "contracting" staff at lower rates and taking larger profits on lower price per service.
Melissa Pollman	97317	Both	ConKraft Construction and Storage 4 Less	Private	Business and Professional Services	Construction and storage facility	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Over taxation and regulation. The high taxes and regulations in OR are not business friendly. The recent break from federal tax codes is a great example of OR attitude towards business. The state is trying to fund the govt on the backs of local businesses. This is a failed tactic.
Zoe becker	97338	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Oregon businesses struggle with high costs and too many complicated regulations. The biggest barrier is slow permits, high taxes, and unclear rules that make it hard to start or grow a business.
Scott Friedman	97304	Organization/Business	GT Landscape Solutions	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	101-500 people	Business climate	Tax and regulatory pressure always adding more cost without the ability to get higher prices.
Melissa Phillips	97302	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Taxes are too high for businesses and individuals. Regulations are choking businesses.
Josie koehne	97119	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Automation will reduce local jobs. Oregon tax breaks should not be assisting job elimination.
Blair Carlson	97140	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The amount of taxes in this state are prohibitive. The money is wasted at an astonishing rate. It's unbelievable.
Bob Grover	97007	Both	Pacific Landscape Management	Private	NA	Commercial Landscape COntracting	500-1000 people	Business climate	NA
LAWRENCE ATKINSON	97304	Both	Instruction Construction	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Workforce Development	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Erratic funding model for nonprofits that do the critical work to move the most vulnerable part of our population
Corky Collier	97218	Both	Columbia Corridor Association	Non-profit	Metals and Machinery	The entire industrial sector, including manufacturing and transportation.	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Creating economic growth out of Oregon values for the environment. Rather than viewing economy and environment in opposition, prioritize systems that combine the two.
carol schirmer	97405	Both	Schirmer Consulting, LLC	Private	NA	landscape architecture and land use planning	1 - 20 people	Business climate	While legislation has been supportive of housing, no matter what the policy, if it doesn't result in staff support of the greater goals, then housing applications get stalled at the front counter on on a staff person's desk.
Patricia Granum	97062	Both	Co-Operations, Inc.	Private	NA	Logistics	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Logistics is an extremely competitive business. For customers to bring product into the state and store/ship these products - rates must be competitive. The increasing cost of business (property tax, CAT, payroll (SAIF) costs make this nearly impossible.
Amanda Warren	97338	Organization/Business	Karma Coffee Bar & Bakery	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Cost/ Taxation. When running a small business profit margins are razor thin since you already don't get to tap into the buying power of your larger competitors. This makes things like paid sick leave coming out of our bank incredibly cumbersome since with shift work we pay not only the sick employee, but also the replacement for the shift. When employees are around for years we are unable to afford raises since we are instead raising every person on our floor each year which does nothing since the poverty line just raises when cost of all other things just raise with it. This also makes the cost of our product go up which then prices us out of some of our customers' ability for extra spending.
Richard Duncan	97302	Both	Rich Duncan Construction Inc	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	21-100 people	Tools for growth	Attracting talent

Amaya Urzaa	97201	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	The biggest problem I see day to day is the tax burden on businesses and their highly-compensated employees in Multnomah County/Portland.
Kentin Bigelow	97223	Both	Genesis Web and Marketing, LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Business Climate - Oregon's business climate could be described as "openly hostile", and Oregon is ranked as one of the worst states in the nation as a place to do business. The main issue is the high cost of business operations due to Oregon's tax and employment policies
KENNY WANG	97266	Organization/Business	PW International, Inc.	Private	Food and Beverage	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	The persistent proposal of new taxes to be imposed on businesses. In addition, to proposals to raid the SAIF reserve other than funds original intended use.
Samantha Shelley	97401	Both	CannXperts	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	The lack of leadership/balancing budget in Oregon and massive tax burdens are not only unfortunate but pushing businesses out of Oregon.
Michael Rompa	97204	Both	Geffen Mesher	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	101-500 people	Business climate	Business taxes and tax policy, the state is not a place that is working hard to retain existing businesses and attract new ones. Businesses are led by people so its not just about business tax issues its also about personal tax issues as well
Jacqueline Yvonne Lawson	97338	Both	World Gym Functional Medicine and Wellness Center	Private	NA	Health and Fitness	1 - 20 people	Business climate	taxes
Tim McBratney	97224	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	We are too encumbered by regulations and high taxation. We are also paying a Metro tax, and I am doubtful that the funds are accounted for.
Keith Leavitt	97756	Both	I founded Confluence Strategies LLC focused on economic, industrial development and ports after long career working for the Port of Portland and State of Oregon.	Private	Business and Professional Services	As consultant - work with private industry and public sector on traded sector growth	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Lack of large industrial sites necessary to compete with other states for traded sector/advanced manufacturing companies.
Randy Miller	97221	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	conventional belief that business is not a positive element to the state's health
Keith Bailey	97301	Organization/Business	Taylor Metal Inc	Private	Metals and Machinery	Construction	21-100 people	Business climate	High regulation and high taxes
Georgia Conrad	97477	Organization/Business	Oregon Workforce Partnership	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Workforce Development	1 - 20 people	Workforce	The primary challenge is the fragmentation of Oregon's public workforce system, which creates friction for both employers and job seekers. Currently, resources—including WIOA, TANF Employment & Training (E&T), and SNAP E&T—are administered through siloed agencies (HECC-OWI, OED, DHS, VR, BOLI, and Business Oregon), leading to uncoordinated service delivery and a lack of unified performance reporting. This structural inefficiency makes it difficult to align talent development with the specific needs of growing industry sectors at the regional level.
Alex Carpenter	97013	Both	Green Ridge Solar Inc	Private	Technology	Renewable Energy	21-100 people	Business climate	The biggest challenge is the cumulative burden of taxes, regulation, labor mandates, and legal risk that make it difficult to operate and grow a construction or energy business in Oregon. It is not one single policy, but the overall cost and unpredictability of the system. Permitting timelines are inconsistent and often slow, requirements vary between jurisdictions, and rules can shift mid-project. At the same time, Oregon's tax structure is high relative to neighboring states, and construction liability standards create significant exposure to litigation. The biggest friction point is unpredictability combined with risk, which makes long term planning and investment more difficult than it should be.
Tom Hoffert	97301	Organization/Business	Salem Area Chamber of Commerce	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Economic Advocacy	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Oregon ranks 47th in business friendliness (MSNBC 2025 poll), making recruiting and retaining businesses very challenging.
James Pliska	89105	Both	Hospitality and Fuel Business	Public	Food and Beverage	Fuel, Hotel	101-500 people	Business climate	Regulations, high taxes
Travis Dawson	97478	Both	Cascade Automation	Private	Forestry and Wood Products	Heavy Industrial Support	21-100 people	Business climate	The main issue that I would like to address is the manufacturing decline that we have seen for decades in Oregon. The biggest barrier or friction is the regulation burden that these industries carry with business taxes running a close second.
Andrew Shirtcliff	97457	Both	Shirtcliff Oil Co.	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	101-500 people	Business climate	Excess taxes on businesses.
Sean Neary	97756	Both	Fitch and Neary PC	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Taxes, government red tape
Dean Blades	97038	Both	Triangle Design & Printing	Public	NA	Printing	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Cost of doing business in this state. Continually creating new taxes or fees are driving business away from the state.
Scott Delbridge	97038	Both	Cowboy Coffee Inc	Public	Food and Beverage	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	Oregon continues to use the vague understanding in the public about taxing "corporations" to tax us small business owners - the $150 annual plus CAT are just two of them. Also the inheritance $1m limit has not been raised since 2006 and lawmakers know this because it makes up $350m of the state budget
Keith Leavitt	97756	Both	Confluence Strategies LLC	Private	Business and Professional Services	Consulting firm focused on trade, industrial and economic development	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Industrial site readiness
KENT GARDNER	97123	Both	RFM Seating in Hillsboro, Oregon	Private	Business and Professional Services	Ergonomic seating manufacturer	21-100 people	Business climate	Oregon does not do enough to promote and support local manufacturing.
Kaye Youngren	97214	Organization/Business	Community Management, Inc.	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	101-500 people	Business climate	Taxes and regulations
Larry Martin	97306	Both	A-dec	Private	NA	Medical Device Design/Manufacturer	1000+ people	Business climate	Overall, Oregon is considered to be very anti-business due to taxation policies, lack of growth incentives, and increasing employee regulations that erode profitability.
Charles Niderost	97426	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	1.Oregon's business tax burden has risen significantly in recent years, including new taxes like the Corporate Activity Tax (CAT) and Paid Leave Oregon, which many businesses say increases costs and complexity. Its corporate tax environment ranks near the bottom nationwide. 2.Income tax and regulatory fees are seen as deterrents to investment compared to other states. 3.Many businesses report that rules change too frequently and are hard to follow, creating compliance headaches and costs. 4.Regulations around land development, planning, employment, and environmental goals are often cited as barriers, especially for small businesses. 5.Housing affordability problems make it difficult to attract or retain workers, which businesses view as part of the economic climate challenge. 6.Oregon struggles with labor shortages in many sectors. A higher cost of living and migration patterns contribute to workforce tightness, especially outside urban hubs. 7.Streamlining permitting and rulemaking processes. 8.Oregon's overall government spending and tax revenue have grown faster than its population — and spending now takes a larger share of state GDP compared with a decade ago. 9.Even if the state budget ends in surplus, many counties and cities across Oregon face deficits, forcing cuts to public services like law enforcement, road maintenance, and health services. This reflects a broader local fiscal strain partly rooted in historical tax limits at the local level that have constrained revenue growth. 10.
Brad Johnson	97471	Both	Umpqua Basin Water	Private	NA	Water Utility	1 - 20 people	Business climate	The Governor portion in the Governor's Prosperity Council
Harold Owen Foutz	97487	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Business taxes - between property taxes (real and personal), state income taxes, sales taxes (corporate activity tax), transportation taxes (Trimet and LTD), local taxes (Portland/Multnomah County business taxes, Metro taxes, etc.), it is just too much. We are making it difficult for businesses to stay in Oregon, let alone relocate to Oregon.
Bettina Schempf	97333-1768	Both	Old Mill Center for Children and Families	Non-profit	NA	Social Services, Health, Early Childhood Education	21-100 people	Business climate	Cost of compliance for housing developments that create affordable workforce housing
Ralph Cole	97202	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Taxes. Our tax rates in the city of Portland are suffocating, and we receive literally no value for them.
Jon Legarza	97070	Organization/Business	We provide professional service to cities, counties, ports, businesses to assist with economic development.	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Availability of land and infrastructure funding. If we keep the same land use statues and polices we are going to continue to lose companies and not attract anymore.
Marv Nelson	97132	Both	A-dec	Private	Metals and Machinery	Medical device manufacturer	1000+ people	Tools for growth	Regulation and tax burden. Access to talent with people leaving the state and a significant decline in Oregon's reputation.
Brandie Foster	97756	Both	Real Estate	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Workforce	Affordable housing for general workforce: teachers, mail carriers, fire fighters, support staff in the hospital (non-pro staff)

Gail Henrikson	97103	Organization/Business	Clatsop County	Public	NA	Local Government	101-500 people	Business climate	Coordination between state permitting agencies and flexibility to help get economic development projects across the finish line.
Ciara Pressler	97211	Organization/Business	Pregame Inc	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	My clients include hundreds of small businesses across Oregon, so this feedback is based on a wide swath, not just my own experience. There is a massive gulf of support for entrepreneurs to go from one person to scale/economic impact. All of the local business accelerators are nonprofit/government administered, and advisors/curricula are not aggressive or current re what it takes to grow a business. Most teach how to start a business, but they don't have a track record or reliable methodology for increasing revenue. Here is a panel I moderated on the topic: https://vimeo.com/1139435261?fl=ip&fe=ec
Kimberley Priestley	97204	Organization/Business	WaterWatch of Oregon	Non-profit	NA	River conservation	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Challenge: Environmental protection in Oregon in the face of federal rollbacks. Outdoor related economies provide huge benefits to our state. We would urge the prosperity council to focus on ensuring environmental protections in this state remain strong.
Tanya Hartnett	97201	Organization/Business	Working Waterfront Coalition	Non-profit	Metals and Machinery	NA	1000+ people	Tools for growth	Portland is currently updating the Economics Opportunity Analysis (EOA) that is supposed to make sure there is enough industrial land for the projected jobs and the EOA will also inform future policies like the North Reach Plan on the Willamette and the Tree Code. Currently city staff is saying Portland has enough industrial land for the jobs projection, however, in that number, what they say is available, is actually constrained land-i.e. brownfields, no infrastructure and up to a 25% slope. In the document, they say that with investment this land will be shovel ready, but they are not clearly defining a pathway or where the funds or programs will come from to actually make the land usable. Portland staff is also ignoring studies on jobs forecasting like the Marine Industrial Land Analysis (MILA) that forecasts the baseline of harbor growth.
Nate Costa	97401	Both	University of Oregon Foundation / Launch Oregon	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	NA	21-100 people	Business climate	Taxation. Very relevant right now given Senate Bill 1507 going on currently. When state tax policy diverges from federal incentives that support investment and risk-taking, it can unintentionally raise the cost of capital for early-stage companies that are trying to attract investment and scale here. For example, carve-outs like eliminating state treatment of QSBS gains and bonus depreciation directly affect the economics of investment in startups and capital-intensive ventures.
William A. Olson	97439	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Workforce	Drug and alcohol addiction and access. Public intoxicated people and lack of public concern for the addicted. Failures in arrest and procecution and imprisonment of drug dealers.
Rachael Barry	97051	Both	Lower Columbia River Watershed Council	Non-profit	NA	Conservation	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	Regulation and permitting
Ken L Fincher	97601	Organization/Business	Oregon Tech	Public	NA	Education	101-500 people	Workforce	Due to legislative funding, Oregon's higher education providers are in a precarious position. We are losing businesses and talent because of the high cost of higher education.
Megan Pozos	97034	Both	Team tube LLC	Private	Metals and Machinery	Steel tubes chrome bar distributor	21-100 people	Tools for growth	Heavy government and red tape. Heavy taxes. No real economic growth
Ryan Beckley	97068	Both	TerraFirma Foundation Systems Inc.	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	101-500 people	Business climate	Taxation, regulation, cost of living.
David Nelson	97801	Both	farmers and ranchers of Eastern Oregon and not an individual group	Private	Food and Beverage	Irrigated crop land	I don't know	Tools for growth	Bring Oregon farmers and ranchers to parity with Washington and Idaho using Columbia River water for agricultural growth
Chris Celauro	97215	Both	Marketing and communications consulting	Private	NA	Business consulting	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Lower taxes on good earners and businesses.
Erin Borla	97759	Both	Roundhouse Foundation	Non-profit	NA	Nonprofit - Rural Support	1 - 20 people	Workforce	state level Community College support is a challenge; the HECC should incentivize them working together.
Leon Telesmanich	97136	Organization/Business	Tillamook Bay Small Business Development Center	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Workforce housing development, condition of roads.
David Nelson (retired Oregon State Senator 1996-2012)	97801	Both	Farmers/Ranchers of Eastern Oregon	Private	NA	Retired Farmer/politician	I don't know	Tools for growth	Oregon uses less than 1/2 of 1% of the Columbia River water, while Washington and Idaho combined use over 7% of the water. Yet Oregon supplies over 14% of the volume of the Columbia. The Willamette River flows more than the Colorado River.
Susan Bladholm	97225	Organization/Business	Frog Ferry	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Transportation	1 - 20 people	Business climate	- Decarbonization/Climate - Portland Downtown Activation - Community Resilience
Kerry Tymchuk	97008	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Actions needed to combat Oregon's reputation as "anti-business."
Robert Guldberg	97405	Both	University of Oregon Knight Campus for Accelerating Scientific Impact Penderia Technologies	Public	Bioscience	NA	101-500 people	Tools for growth	The state ranks near the bottom of the nation in support of its public research universities. States that invest strongly in their R1 research institutions spur economic growth and prosperity through both entrepreneurial startup companies and workforce talent generation that is critical for retaining and attracting high wage existing jobs and companies.
Jody L. Stahancyk	97138/ 97754	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Taxes
Craig Pesti-Strobel	97846	Both	Joseph Main Street, part of the Wallowa County Rural Regional Main Street, part of the Oregon Main Street program.	Non-profit	Business and Professional Services	Downtown and Community Development; Arts and Cultural District	1 - 20 people	Tools for growth	In communities heavily dependent upon tourism, there is a need to assist communities with developing local infrastructure and community-wide visions and plans to develop a year-round sustainable economic base. This includes helping bring diverse small-business owners together with local governments and Main Street organizations to expand their vision and develop working procedures to research tourism trends and attract a wide diversity of persons who will contribute to the local economy in sustainable ways.
Derek Tonn	97420	Both	Southwestern Oregon SBDC	Public	Business and Professional Services	Education	1 - 20 people	Business climate	At least in our region of the state? Residents seem to either be stuck in the past or struggle with an "inferiority complex." When we lost a lot of what made us strong with the timber industry, it deeply harmed our region's psyche. And that "glass is half empty" view of the region (by locals) accelerates the downward spiral that we've been stuck in for decades. When I relocated from Minnesota for work, I had several locals ask: "Why would you want to come here?" I replied: "Why WOULDN'T I want to come here?!" We live in paradise, from the perspective of climate and natural beauty. But when locals wonder and ask why anyone would want to live/work here? That is "kryptonine" when trying to work on new business recruitment.
Scott Steward	74014	Organization/Business	Florence Area Chamber of Commerce	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	1000+ people	Business climate	Reducing taxes and fees on businesses and individuals to they can spend/invest as they see fit. They know far better than government what works/advances their industries. Similarly, I want to see government bodies stop trying to steal transient lodging tax income for anything other than what it was established--tourism and its growth! Tourism is Oregon's third largest industry and should not be micromanaged by government.
tim campbell	97401	Both	Commercial Real Estate	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Barriers to Entry for companies wanting to grow or locate here. The permitting process being too encumbered, as well as the regulatory layers for the same thing (wetlands as an example. there should be one agency hoop, not three).
Mark Gregory	97439	Both	Oregon Small Business Development Center Network	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	101-500 people	Tools for growth	Connecting Oregon's small businesses to both market research to support business growth and information about state and federal programs that can help their businesses remains a critical focus.
Jeff Knapp	97703	Both	Visit Bend	Non-profit	NA	Tourism and Hospitality	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Oregon's CAT tax and high-income tax, coupled with land use, have us currently sitting as one of the least friendly states to do business in. We need a strong economy to help balance growing social needs and help cities and counties fund essential services as property taxes through measure 5 and 50 limit levers to pull to address growing costs and needs.
Cheri Martinen	97739	Both	Bancorp Insurance	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	it is hard to be an employer here, the taxes, employee rules and regulations dont even get me started on building retail space to run your business out of
Ashley Espinoza	97401	Both	Lane Workforce Partnership. One of the Nine Workforce Boards	Non-profit	NA	All	1 - 20 people	Workforce	A significant challenge remains the gap between statewide priorities and local implementation. Stronger executive-level oversight and more active collaboration across agencies would help ensure alignment, reduce duplication, and accelerate results for communities and employers.
Scott Cooper	97756	Myself	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Business climate	Oregon's is badly overregulating its labor force to the detriment of business. State-imposed restrictions are artificially constricting workforce supply and raising wages. Oregon's standards for recruiting doctors, nurses and teachers are the most stringent in the nation and add significant time and effort to any effort to hire. Requiring a license to braid hair is overkill. The use of Paid Leave Oregon to fund mental health conditions is crippling. Allowing use of Paid Leave Oregon for intermittent leave makes scheduling of workers almost impossible. Oregon needs employers and employers need reliable workers.
John C. Renstrom	97701	Both	Johnson benefit Planning	Private	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Cost that Commercial Customers pay for Group Health Insurance
Scott Cooper	97756	Both	NeighborImpact	Non-profit	NA	Human Services	101-500 people	Workforce	The state's childcare system is misaligned with employee needs.
Jordan Pape	97401-2119	Organization/Business	The Pape Group, Inc.	Private	Metals and Machinery	NA	1000+ people	Business climate	State regulations, specifically land use and employment. Oregon is the 7th most heavily regulated states. Taxes, the average state tax burden is less than Oregon's, giving companies and their executive leaders economic reasons to leave for other states.
Taylor Rembowski	97918	Both	Malheur County Economic Development	Public	Business and Professional Services	NA	1 - 20 people	Business climate	CAT Tax and Industrial Infrastructure Readiness
Jennifer Crockett	97103	Both	I am the Executive Director of the historic Liberty Theatre in Astoria, as well as a professional clarinetist with the Oregon Symphony. I also sit on the Board of Directors for the national League of Historic American Theatres.	Non-profit	NA	Arts and Culture	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Oregon's arts and culture sector, particularly in our rural community, lacks predictable and stable public investment despite its measurable economic impact. At the Liberty Theatre in Astoria, less than 1 percent of our operating budget comes from state funding. Clatsop County has no dedicated arts budget or functioning arts council. The City of Astoria provides approximately 1 percent of our operating support through a competitive tourism-based grant. Yet the Liberty Theatre functions as a regional economic engine. Nearly 50 percent of our audience travels from the Portland metro area, generating approximately $1.5 million in direct economic impact annually to our small downtown through lodging, dining, and retail spending. The core friction point is that Oregon's business climate does not currently recognize arts and culture infrastructure as economic infrastructure. Cultural institutions are treated as optional amenities rather than core drivers of tourism, workforce attraction, small business vitality, and community identity. In addition, the historic theater industry is experiencing a sustained 30 percent decline in ticket sales due to economic insecurity and changing consumer behavior. The Liberty Theatre is experiencing this same trend. Unlike many industries, arts organizations operate on thin margins and lack stabilization mechanisms during downturns. Without structural investment, rural arts institutions face contraction at precisely the moment when communities need economic diversification.
Megan De Salvo	97223	Organization/Business	Tigard Area Chamber of Commerce and I am a local Small Business Owner as well	Non-profit	Technology	Non-Profit and My Small Business is a Tech Company	1 - 20 people	Business climate	Oregon has extraordinary advantages! We have the talent, natural resources, innovation, quality of life everyone dreams of. However, our current tax structure, regulatory environment, and cost burdens are making it increasingly difficult for businesses of all sizes to grow, invest, and provide family-wage jobs. Small businesses are dying, businesses are moving at an alarming rate, we need action now.

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[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
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[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Workforce	NA	Workforce development, not only for the exisiting workforce but also for the incoming workforce. For example I am actually quite new to Oregon, this is my 6 state, so I bring a wide knowledge base. Oregon makes some things challenging for the exisiting workforce to stay certified in trade licenses. Oregon, also needs to focus on developing the workforce to keep young people in Oregon.	The greatest success I have seen is to teach the youth including college students the jobs that are available.. ask me for more details there is not enough room to fully explain.	Success is developing a strong workforce in more than technology to attract businesses and for youth retention to choose to stay in Oregon instead of migrating out.	All partners need to work together.	Unknown (Only been in Oregon for five months, but I bring a wide knowledge from five other states)	Stronger workforce development initiative. Oregon has some great programs through workforce, but not enough employers know about them or utilize them.	Yes	Tools for growth	Working towards a stronger presence at Select USA and Trade mission will help. Oregon from what I have seen does not have strong enough materials available for businesses looking to expand and invest. I have one local food manufacture that gets asked regularly to relocate their operation out of state. Oregon's laws are too restrictive; the incoming senior leaders could very well at some future point take their operation else where due to the cost of operating a business in Oregon and other locations are dangling very attractive offers.	Starts with better business incentives. Lets talk permitting processes, infrastructure, local initiatives and so forth.	The focus first is on business retention. Keep the businesses we have, do not give them a reasons to leave. Once we have offered some better incentives for Oregon businesses to stay, new business will come.	Legislature, local governments and employers.	Unknown	Idaho, Utah, North Dakota	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Economic Development, Prosperity needs to have actionable items. They need to show the citizens that Oregon legislature is serious about improving the business climate, (not just talk) but to actually have an output. And The council needs to have a strong voice, to keep public and businesses informed on discussions and action items. It always takes a village, or in this case the entire state! Do not neglect the Eastern side.	NA
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[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Workforce	NA	People won't work for minimum wage no matter what it is. They feel minimum wage is beneath them. When you raise minimum wage, all other wages increase, leading to inflation.	Stop paying people not to work. Have better job matching through employment security. I know several cooks on unemployment even though every restaurant in our area is desperate for cooks. Don't give welfare to people capable of working.	Fewer job vacancies; fewer welfare costs; more business growth. I could add another shift if I could find employees. I even offer housing.	Legislature	NA	Econ 101	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Our government is far too big. It should stick to basics like infrastructure, law and order. Leave prosperity to the people.	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	NA	NA	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	The Board of Forestry has passed on a 4-3 vote a Habitat Conservation Plan to be effective for 70 years which would place over 1/2 of the lands they manage off limits to management harming rural Oregon. Please read the Davis, Wright and Tremaine document to the Ways and Means Committee showing it is financially insufficient for the Department of Forestry to continue without general fund money	DWT-ProsperityCouncil%20Letter%20020226.pdf
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	NA	Texas, Florida and Idaho are attracting the majority of new investments from businesses. Copying their business friendly policies would be best.	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	We need huge goals and need to re inspire an entire generation of people to want to work and want to win. We have allowed a vocal minority to gain too much influence. Oregon should become, say, a billionaire tax haven in spite of all the rhetoric against billionaires and the wealth gap. We need those people here to bring jobs and spend money. Central Oregon needs to build 10 story buildings. Oregon should be adding another pro sports team, not fighting to keep the Blazers. Oregon should be fighting to be the number one power producer in the country. We should be aiming for near 0 electrical costs by producing so much power, it's nearly free to individuals.	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	I'd prefer not to comment on this.	I'm not able to comment on this.	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Dig deep. Go big or go home. But pay attention to those pesky details of whose work, whose costs, and whose benefit derive from your efforts. Look at all of Oregon, not just I-5 population centers, and ensure a balanced urban-rural approach.	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	SAIF	Business Energy Tax Credits for biomass power plants, long term property tax credits for plant and equipment investment	Yes	Workforce	NA	Excessive employment leave laws are killing manufacturing in Oregon. We have 400 employees and they missed 40,000 hours last year. We have about 20 people missing every workday and we never know which ones because they are protected by law.If using sick leave provide a doctors note.	eliminate or severely reduce sick leave , eliminate paternity leave for men, require doctor's note proving illness when taking sick leave. Require employees to give notice when missing work. Reducing paid time off and PERS benefits of public employees would help private employers compete for workers. If public employees just showed up for work, the public employee count could be reduced by a minimum of 20% reducing cost to the	Employees showing up for work everyday and producing enough product for our company to cover our costs and stay in business. The state budget would have ample funds if the employee count was reduced	The legislature controlled by public unions have to pass laws rolling back leave laws, reduce PERS benefits, and public employee headcount	The Oregon Department of Forestry timber sale program. IT presently is undergoing a new management plan severely reducing management on over 1/2 the lands they manage and the department will become dependent on general fund money for the first time	Idaho Division of State Lands has partnered with the Feds to increase harvests by 100 million board feet annually	Yes	Tools for growth	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Yes	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	Programs that support: Youth internships and work-based learning Partnerships between workforce boards and community organizations Flexible funding that allows supportive services, mentorship, and coordination Career exploration and hands-on career technical education pathways Oregon's willingness to support regional workforce partnerships has been especially impactful and should be strengthened, not reduced.	I am not familiar with other state's practices.	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	Thank you.	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	In this space, Preschool Promise and OPK have been critical programs to expanding access to early learning and care. Without these state investments, many more Oregon communities would be in childcare deserts. Those investments need to continue.	NA	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	CCB certification & enforcement	NA	No	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

APPENDIX D

Listening Session

Facilitators' Guide

PROSPERITY COUNCIL: LISTENING SESSION

FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

Thank you for your willingness to lead a listening session to inform the Oregon Prosperity Council's work. This guide provides a suggested meeting agenda, talking points, and includes the required report out template that project staff will synthesize for the Prosperity Council's review.

Facilitator Responsibilities

- **Before the meeting:**
  - Review the facilitator's guide
  - Select a location for your meeting
  - Schedule and invite participants (sample invitation language below)
  - Arrange for a note-taker or plan to take detailed notes
- **During the meeting.** Facilitate a discussion using the provided agenda and prompts in February - March 20, 2026.
- **After the meeting.** Submit notes using the Google form by March 20, 2026.

EXAMPLE EMAIL INVITATION

Hello [name],

[Introduce yourself if you are not already acquainted]. I have volunteered to facilitate a listening session to support the advancement of Oregon's economic prosperity and growth for Governor Kotek's Prosperity Council. I believe your insights and recommendations are important for this work and invite you to attend.

As you may have seen in the news, the Prosperity Council is a statewide advisory group convened by Governor Kotek, representing diverse regions, industries, and labor. Over the next several months, the Council will develop near- and long-term recommendations focused on business climate, workforce, and tools for economic growth. The Prosperity Council will present their recommendations in June of this year.

Because you are an engaged member of the Oregon **[business/arts/etc.]** community, **we are inviting you to take part in this [Title] listening**

session, on [date] in person at [location]. If you are interested in participating, please respond to confirm your attendance.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you,
[Name]

[Consider adding the Prosperity Roadmap as an attachment in addition to the link in the email text]

HOLD YOUR MEETING

Meeting Agenda:

WELCOME [5 mins]

- Introductions [name, title, organization]
- Meeting objectives:
  - Gather practical, business-informed recommendations in three areas—Business Climate, Workforce, and Tools for Growth—to inform the Governor's Prosperity Council's recommendations for strengthening Oregon's competitiveness, economic growth, and long-term revenue stability.
- Ground rules:
  - All comments and feedback will be shared but not attributed to individuals.
  - Any sensitive business information will not be included in the notes.
  - Assume good faith and expertise. Everyone is here to contribute insights from their experience.
  - Focus on actionable ideas. Stay within scope and frame input as a specific change Oregon can make—not just a problem.

LEVEL SETTING [5 mins]

Use the following overview to provide context. This does not need to be read verbatim; please summarize in your own words.

What is the Prosperity Council?

- A statewide group representing different regions, key sectors, and labor, convened by Governor Kotek as an outside advisory group to recommend strategies and actions to advance Oregon’s economic prosperity and growth.
- The council is focused on strategies in three areas: Business Climate, Workforce, and Tools for Growth.
- The council’s charge is to develop near-, medium-, and long-term recommendations in each of the three focus areas.
- Council meetings began in January 2026 and will conclude in June 2026, after delivering their report of recommendations.

How is economic development being defined?

- Improving conditions for businesses to start, invest, and grow (e.g., regulatory predictability, access to capital, infrastructure, suitable sites)
- Building a skilled workforce so employers can hire and workers can access good-paying, career-connected opportunities
- Using public tools and partnerships (e.g., incentives, technical assistance, site readiness, cluster strategies) to unlock private investment and productivity

FOCUS AREA DISCUSSION

The Prosperity Council has organized its work around three focus areas: Business Climate, Workforce, and Tools for Growth. Facilitators should use their judgment to focus discussions on the topic(s) that best align with participants’ experience and expertise. Some sessions may naturally focus on one area, while others may span two or all three.

Facilitators should prompt the discussion of each focus area first by reading the focus area description. Facilitators may also consider having these descriptions available for the participants to read and refer back to during the discussion:

- **Business Climate:** Oregon's business climate reflects the extent to which the state provides a predictable and competitive environment for employers through practical policies related to regulation, permitting, and taxation, while also maintaining long-term revenue stability to support public services and economic growth.
- **Workforce:** Oregon's workforce environment reflects how well the state's education, training, and talent development systems align Oregonians'

skills with the needs of employers, particularly in growing sectors, and how effectively those systems adapt over time to support economic opportunity and a competitive labor market.

- **Tools for growth:** Oregon's economic development toolkit reflects the set of policies, programs and investments (such as site readiness, land use and permitting processes, incentives, infrastructure, and local initiatives) that shape the state's ability to attract new businesses and support the growth and expansion of existing employers.

Then begin the discussion using the same core questions (below) to guide the conversation.

Core discussion questions (apply to all focus areas)

- What challenge would you like addressed in the Prosperity Council's recommendations? What is the biggest barrier or friction point in this area?
- What solution or specific change would you recommend to address this challenge?
- What would success look like in 2-3 years?
- Who has to act for this to happen? (i.e. legislature, local governments, employers, education/training partners, etc.)
- Which existing state programs and policies does Oregon have that you want to see continue? What programs or policies have been most useful for you?
- What promising models or best practices have you seen in other states that you'd like Oregon to emulate?

CLOSING THE MEETING

- Thank your participants for attending and offering their ideas.
- We will compile the report out and send it to the Prosperity Council for their work to define near-, medium- and long-term recommendations in these focus areas.
- The Prosperity Council will present their recommendations in June.

AFTER THE MEETING: NEXT STEPS

Submit your report out ASAP

Please enter your report out of the discussion using this Google form so that it can make its way to the committee.

If you encounter technical difficulties, please reach out to Kath Nester (nester@econw.com).

Send thank you email to your participants

Within a few days of the meeting, we recommend sending a follow-up and thank-you to all meeting attendees. Here is a start that you can customize:

> "Hello ____,
>
> I am following up with you to extend my gratitude for your participation in the Prosperity Council Listening Session.
>
> If you have any questions or concerns for the Prosperity Council, you can contact them at Prosperity.Roadmap@oregon.gov. You can also keep track of the Prosperity Council's work on the website, and fill out the online survey if you have further recommendations."

Submissions & Feedback

Oregon Prosperity Council

Submissions & Feedback — Contents

47 submitted documents, arranged by date of submittal.

Appendix E — Submissions & Feedback

Our Oregon

Oregon Semiconductor Industry Coalition

Oregon Farm Bureau

Oregon Trails Coalition

Building Resilience Coalition

Wild Salmon Center

Tax Fairness Oregon

Reorganizing Oregon's Economic Development Ecosystems: Lessons from Other States

June 12, 2025

Jasper Riogeist, Graduate Research Assistant, Institute for Policy Research & Engagement
Robert Parker, Director of Strategy & Technical Solutions, University of Oregon Institute for Policy Research & Engagement
Josh Bruce, Associate Director of Applied Research , University of Oregon Institute for Policy Research & Engagement; Program Director UO EDA University Center of Economic Development

Please direct inquiries to Bob Parker (rgp@uoregon.edu) or Josh Bruce (jdbruce@uoregon.edu).

Oregon faces growing economic challenges. Businesses are leaving the state. Job and population growth trail national trends, and rural regions face persistent stagnation. These are not isolated issues; they reflect a broader problem: Oregon lacks a coordinated, comprehensive statewide economic development strategy. While housing, education, and behavioral health have been named state priorities by Governor Kotek, economic development has not. And yet, without a healthy economic development ecosystem, Oregon will struggle to make meaningful or efficient progress on any of its goals. In this white paper, we examine economic development ecosystem models, drawing insights from other states to propose an alternative framework for Oregon.

Oregon's economic development ecosystem is shaped by a decentralized network of organizations: state agencies, regional groups, nonprofits, and private industry. However, this network currently lacks clear leadership, shared directions, and articulated desired outcomes. In this white paper, we examine economic development ecosystem models, drawing insights from other states to propose an alternative framework for Oregon.

Business Oregon exists to support economic development, but it does not currently lead a unified statewide strategy. Other states do this differently. Case studies from Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, Colorado, and Kentucky offer models that Oregon could adapt to strengthen coordination, align regional efforts, and improve outcomes.

This white paper makes the case for treating economic development as a core state priority and for building a more intentional statewide economic development ecosystem. It outlines current economic risks, examines why Oregon is losing ground, and highlights how structural fragmentation—across agencies, regions, and funding streams—undermines coordinated progress. Drawing on examples from other states, it identifies policy tools and ecosystem design features that support stronger alignment, leadership, and outcomes. It recommends a central ecosystem model led by the Governor and coordinated through a central agency such as Business Oregon.

The choice is not between economic development and other goals. Economic development is what makes the other goals possible.

Imagine that Oregon's economic development ecosystem embraces a consistent and wholistic strategy to coordinate implementation of economic development efforts across lines: public and private and nonprofit, local and regional and state, urban, rural and frontier. What benefits would that bring and what organizational framework would support it?

The Foundation of Oregon's Priorities

Oregon's current statewide priorities—housing and homelessness, education, and behavioral health—are well-chosen and widely supported. Each addresses a pressing need. However, progress in these areas is fundamentally tied to the strength of Oregon's economy. Without sustained job growth, rising incomes, and business investment, the state will struggle to generate the necessary resources and momentum. Economic development is what drives state and local tax revenues, which in turn provides the funding to address the states pressing problems. Economic development is foundational to Oregon's future, and yet it is not currently treated as a formal state priority.

This omission is particularly significant given Oregon's tax structure. Because the state relies so heavily on income tax, job creation is one of the few levers policymakers can pull to increase public revenues without raising tax rates. While there has been growing interest in structural tax reform, it is more politically feasible and economically immediate to focus on expanding the number and quality of jobs in Oregon's economy. A larger, more productive workforce increases the tax base, allowing the state to better fund essential services, including healthcare and housing.

This is not simply about revenue. Economic development is a key driver of social and economic resilience and opportunity. When more Oregonians can access stable employment, affordable housing becomes more attainable, school districts see more consistent enrollment and funding, and behavioral health systems face less strain. Simply put, without a healthy economic development ecosystem, the state cannot advance its other priorities as effectively or as efficiently as it otherwise could.

At present, Oregon lacks a unified, forward-looking strategy for economic development. The ecosystem is made up of many capable actors—state agencies, regional groups, economic development districts, nonprofits, and business partners—but there is no central plan, no clear coordination, and no agreed-upon outcomes.

Oregon Business Climate

Economic Strengths and Opportunities in Oregon

Oregon is not starting from scratch. The state has economic assets that many others would envy. In CNBC's 2024 Top States for Business rankings, Oregon placed 9th in innovation—reflecting strong research capacity, a skilled workforce, and a culture of entrepreneurship (CNBC, 2024). The state also performs well on quality-of-life indicators and has deep institutional strengths in higher education, advanced manufacturing, and the outdoor economy.

Oregon is also a leader in high-tech and traded sector industries. The state maintains a strong trade surplus, exporting more than it imports, with one in eight Oregon jobs connected to international trade as of 2023. Its export portfolio is broad, spanning high-tech electronics, machinery, transportation equipment, agricultural products, and professional services. Oregon's geographic location—along the Pacific Rim—offers businesses efficient access to global markets via air, sea, rail, and road infrastructure. While industrial land and broadband availability remain uneven, Oregon's port and logistics systems offer a competitive foundation for growth.

The state's high-tech economy continues to be a pillar of strength. Oregon plays a central role in the semiconductor and electronics supply chain and consistently ranks highly for innovation and technology output. Universities contribute licensed technologies and skilled graduates, and a growing clean energy sector is positioning Oregon as a leader in the green economy. Foreign direct investment also plays a visible role in several industries, further diversifying the state's base.

At the regional level, traditional resource industries remain significant contributors. Agriculture, forestry, and wood products continue to drive economic activity in rural areas, with increasing attention to sustainability and value-added processing. Small and mid-sized businesses are especially important: they make up a large share of Oregon's exporters and are often key drivers of community resilience, particularly outside the urban core.

Entrepreneurship and small business development receive meaningful support across the state through nonprofit networks, local governments, and targeted state programs. Combined with Oregon's generally high quality of life, these factors can help attract and retain talent, even in a highly mobile labor market.

That said, Oregon's investment in economic development has not always matched its potential. While the state invests in infrastructure, comparative data from the Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) suggests that Oregon ranks near the bottom among its peers in per capita economic development spending when infrastructure is excluded. Without a clearly defined statewide strategy or performance metrics, many investments are difficult to align or evaluate. A coordinated plan could better ensure that resources—whether financial, institutional, or geographic—are directed toward outcomes that serve the whole state, especially in rural and under-resourced regions.

Taken together, Oregon has the ingredients for a competitive, future-facing economy. The opportunity lies in how the state organizes and mobilizes those ingredients—through stronger ecosystem structure, statewide coordination, and a clear understanding of the outcomes it aims to achieve.

The Problems Oregon Faces

Despite these strengths, Oregon is facing a number of economic warning signs. Businesses and jobs are leaving the state. According to recent report by the University of Oregon's Institute for Policy Research & Engagement (IPRE), a growing number of Oregon companies are being courted by out-of-state recruiters. The study found that Oregon businesses are being actively targeted by out-of-state recruiters—and in many cases, successfully. Of the Oregon businesses contacted by out-of-state economic development entities, 68% ultimately chose to relocate or expand operations outside of the state (IPRE Business Recruitment Report, 2024).

This is part of a broader trend. Oregon's population and job growth now lag behind national averages. While the U.S. economy has continued to expand, Oregon's GDP and employment growth have slowed. In the Portland metro area – long considered the engine of the state's economy – job losses, rising commercial vacancies, and business closures have prompted concern about a potential "doom loop," in which economic decline, falling tax revenues, and public service cuts feedback on each other (The Oregonian, 2025).

In rural Oregon, the problems are different but no less urgent. Many rural communities face persistent economic stagnation, marked by limited access to capital, declining population, and slow job growth. These areas are often cut off from emerging industries and the infrastructure needed to support them. While some rural regions have begun to diversify, the pace of change is slow and uneven.

The state also faces compounding structural constraints: housing remains unaffordable in most urban and rural markets alike; healthcare and childcare systems are strained; and basic infrastructure, including broadband and industrial land, is not keeping pace with demand. These are social, infrastructure, and public finance challenges, but they are also economic development challenges. They shape workforce participation, business location decisions, and regional competitiveness.

A looming demographic shift will add further strain. According to the Oregon Employment Department, nearly one quarter of Oregon's workforce is over the age of 55. As these workers retire, the state faces the loss of deep institutional knowledge and critical skillsets—not easily or quickly replaced. At the same time, delayed retirements and a lack of new job openings can create bottlenecks for younger and mid-career workers, limiting economic mobility and innovation across sectors.

These trends are not destiny, but they point to a need for deliberate action. Without a coordinated strategy, Oregon risks falling further behind and failing to deliver on the potential its assets and investments suggest it can achieve.

The Current State of Oregon's Business Climate

Recent national rankings paint a sobering picture of how Oregon is perceived as a place to do business. In CNBC's 2024 "Top States for Business" report, Oregon ranked 28th for overall economic strength and 48th in business friendliness—two categories driven by input from business leaders and measurable indicators like cost of doing business, regulation, and infrastructure (CNBC, 2024). The state fared no better in Chief Executive's 2024 rankings, placing 43rd out of 50, or in the Tax Foundation's 2025 State Tax Competitiveness Index, where Oregon ranked 30th overall and 49th in corporate tax environment.

These national rankings reflect more than perception; they align with the tangible trend of businesses leaving the state. As previously noted, this includes the significant finding that 68% of Oregon businesses targeted by out-of-state economic development entities ultimately chose to relocate or expand operations elsewhere (IPRE Business Recruitment Report, 2024).

The report identified a range of factors driving these decisions: regulatory complexity, tax burden, lack of industrial land, unaffordable housing, and infrastructure constraints. While none of these challenges are unique to Oregon, the combination and persistence of these issues has highlighted a broader issue with Oregon's economic climate: a growing perception that the state is a harder place to do business, expand, or invest. Without a coordinated strategy to address these challenges—and to play to Oregon's strengths—the state risks continued slippage in competitiveness and outcomes.

Strategic Analysis

Why Businesses Leave, Stay, or Grow in Oregon

To better understand why businesses choose to leave Oregon, expand elsewhere, or stay and grow in-state, this section draws on the push/pull/anchor framework from the *External Business Recruitment* report produced by the Institute for Policy Research & Engagement (IPRE) for Business Oregon.

This framework breaks business decision-making into three categories: Push factors that drive businesses away, pull factors that attract them elsewhere, and anchor factors that keep them rooted in place

Push Factors

Push factors are internal barriers or disincentives that make doing business in Oregon more difficult. These are the reasons companies begin to consider leaving in the first place. The most frequently cited include:

- <u>Regulatory complexity</u>—permitting timelines and compliance processes are often seen as slow, fragmented, and hard to navigate.
- <u>Tax burden</u>—while Oregon lacks a sales tax, its corporate and personal income tax rates are comparatively high and often unpredictable.
- <u>Lack of available land and infrastructure</u>—especially industrial land that is site-ready for expansion.
- <u>High housing costs</u>—which limit the ability to attract or retain a stable workforce.
- <u>Workforce gaps</u>—both in technical talent and in basic labor supply, particularly in rural areas or fast-growing sectors.

These factors don’t operate in isolation. When they compound, they create an environment that feels increasingly difficult to operate in, especially for mid-sized and growing firms.

Pull Factors

Pull factors are external incentives offered by other states to draw Oregon companies away. The IPRE report makes clear that Oregon businesses are being actively recruited by other states—and that many are responding. Common pull factors include:

- Lower tax burdens
- More aggressive incentive packages, including direct financial offers tied to job creation
- Simplified permitting and regulatory environments, which reduce time-to-market
- Direct outreach from governors or state agencies, signaling that business attraction is a high priority elsewhere

These efforts are often highly coordinated and targeted. Businesses that feel undervalued or unsupported in Oregon are more likely to listen.

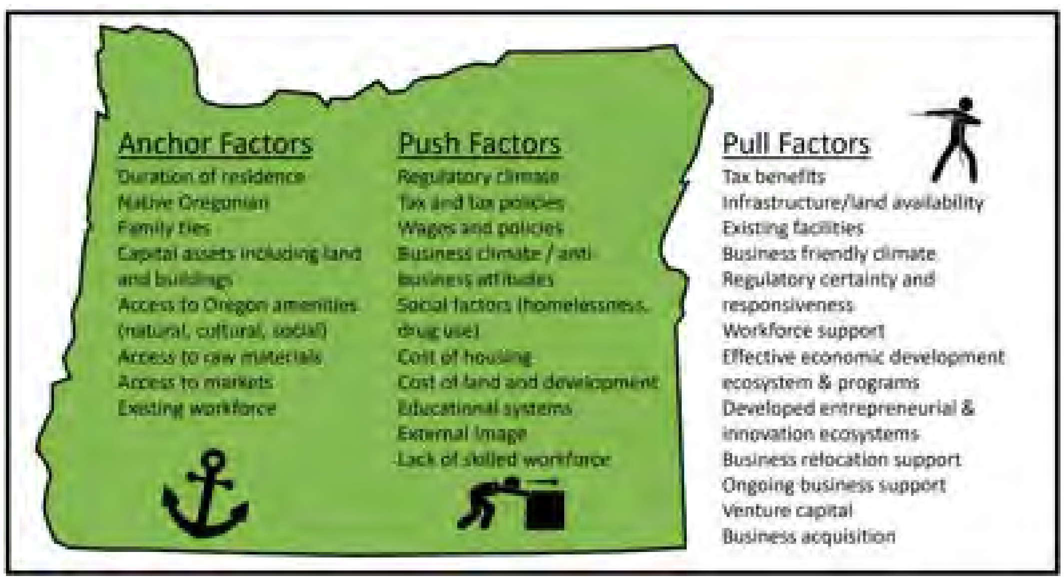
Anchor Factors

Not all businesses leave. Many remain committed to Oregon because of the unique value the state provides. Anchor factors are the characteristics that keep companies rooted—and can serve as a foundation for future growth:

- Access to talent, including through higher education partnerships
- Quality of life and natural environment, a frequent asset in recruiting talent
- Existing industry clusters and local supply chains, which lower costs and foster innovation
- Local leadership and civic relationships, including municipal governments, chambers, and nonprofit partners
- Long-term relationships with employees, communities, and other institutions, which are not easily replicated elsewhere
- While these factors are harder to measure than tax rates or incentives, they matter deeply -- particularly for Oregon-headquartered companies with long-standing local ties.

A coordinated economic development strategy should be designed to address all three categories. That means reducing push factors, resisting pull factors, and reinforcing anchor factors through deliberate ecosystem design. Oregon has the building blocks. What it needs is a plan to align them.

Exhibit 1: Push, Pull, Anchor Framework



Source: IPRE Business Recruitment Report, 2024

Understanding Economic Development Ecosystems: Types of Organizational Structures

An *economic development ecosystem* is a network of interconnected organizations and institutions within a region that collaborate to enhance the area's economic well-being. Economic development ecosystems typically encompass public agencies (state and local governments, economic development districts), private-sector players (businesses, investors, industry associations), and nonprofit or academic partners (chambers of commerce, universities, workforce organizations) all working in concert. This ecosystem approach is vital for effective state and regional development strategies because no single entity can drive growth alone – economic development thrives in ecosystems, not silos. By coordinating efforts across sectors, regions can align their resources and expertise toward shared goals. In short, when government, businesses, and community organizations act in partnership, they amplify each other's efforts and build a more resilient, competitive regional economy. Several economic development ecosystem models exist which are discussed in the following sections.

Centralized/Hierarchical Model

This structure features a clear central authority, often a state governor a single organization or government agency, that takes the lead in directing economic development efforts. Decision-making and resource allocation are concentrated at the top of the hierarchy. Public Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) frequently adopt this model, organizing themselves into departments or divisions based on geography, service, or subject area, with department heads reporting to an Executive Director. For instance, a city or county EDO might have departments for business development, business finance, and community development, all operating under the direction of an Executive Director.

This model can offer strong leadership, clear lines of authority, and enhanced accountability, ensuring that efforts are aligned with a central strategy. Financial analysis, reporting, and overall data management can also be simplified in a centralized structure. However, a highly centralized approach may lack the flexibility and responsiveness needed to address the diverse needs of ecosystem participants. It can also potentially hinder innovation by limiting autonomy and relying on top-down decision-making. The rigidity and formal hierarchies inherent in this structure can sometimes inhibit collaboration and create barriers to task completion.

Decentralized/Networked Model

In contrast to the centralized approach, the decentralized model emphasizes collaboration and partnerships among various independent organizations and institutions. There is no single dominant entity; instead, the ecosystem functions through interconnected relationships and shared goals. The economic development ecosystem in Raleigh, North Carolina exemplifies this model, with small business owners at the center of a network involving the City of Raleigh and numerous external partners. The Ecosystem Economy, in general, relies on a network where value is co-created through collaboration between diverse participants. Network organizational structures are often seen as versatile, scalable, and adaptable.

This model can foster innovation by bringing together diverse perspectives and expertise. It can also be more responsive to localized needs and opportunities. However, the success of a decentralized model hinges on strong communication and coordination mechanisms to prevent fragmentation and duplication of efforts. Building trust and establishing shared objectives among the network participants are also critical for effective collaboration. Managing the complexity of multiple interdependencies is a key challenge in this structure.

Public Sector Driven Model

In this model, government entities, such as local or regional development agencies, take the primary responsibility for initiating, funding, and managing economic development initiatives. These organizations often operate with public funds and are accountable to government bodies. Many states, including Connecticut, run economic development programs through several freestanding public agencies, each responsible for different programs and services like business financing and tax incentives. The Canadian Yukon Economic Development organizational structure, with a Deputy Minister at the top overseeing various directorates like Regional Economic Development and Business and Industry Development, provides an example of a public sector-driven model.

This structure can ensure public accountability and alignment with broader government policies and priorities. Public sector entities often have access to significant financial resources and the authority to implement large-scale projects. However, this model might be susceptible to political influences and bureaucratic processes, potentially leading to slower decision-making and reduced agility. Engaging the private sector effectively can also be a challenge if the approach is overly top-down.

Private Sector Driven Model

In this structure, economic development efforts are primarily led and funded by private businesses, industry associations, or business-led organizations. These entities often have a strong focus on market needs and business growth. Private EDOs are typically governed by a board of directors composed of individuals with diverse business expertise. A Regional Business Council, with a board drawn from CEOs and business leaders across various sectors, and committees focused on areas like business attraction and workforce development, would represent a private sector-driven model.

This model can bring strong business acumen, efficiency, and a market-oriented approach to economic development. Decisions are often made quickly and are directly aligned with the needs of the business community. However, a purely private sector-driven approach might prioritize the interests of its members over broader community benefits and could face challenges in securing public trust and accessing public resources. Coordination with public sector entities might also require deliberate effort.

Public-Private Partnership Model

This approach combines the resources and expertise of both the public and private sectors through formal agreements and collaborative initiatives to achieve shared economic development goals. Public-private EDOs are often governed by a mixed board of directors that includes representatives from business, labor, civic groups, nonprofit organizations, and government agencies. Interlocal Partnerships, formal agreements between public agencies to jointly exercise powers, and collaborations with Corporate Partners, where both entities cooperate to promote economic growth, are examples of this model.

This structure can leverage the strengths of the different sectors, combining public resources and oversight with private sector efficiency and innovation. It can lead to more sustainable and impactful outcomes by aligning the interests of diverse stakeholders. However, establishing clear roles, responsibilities, and accountability mechanisms is crucial. Careful negotiation and management are required to avoid potential conflicts of interest and ensure that shared goals are effectively pursued.

Regional Development Organization Model

This model focuses on economic development at a multi-jurisdictional level, fostering collaboration among several local governments or communities within a specific region. RDOs, which can include Economic Development Districts (EDDs) and Councils of Governments (COGs), provide planning and development services to their member local governments. The Advance Albany County Alliance (New

York), with its proposed Local Development Corporation (LDC) governed by a board representing business, civic, philanthropic, academic, non-profit, and public sector leaders from across the county, exemplifies a regional approach. Similarly, the Wisconsin Regional Economic Development Partners map illustrates a network of eleven regional organizations working across the state.

This model allows for addressing economic issues that extend beyond the boundaries of individual communities, enabling the development of economies of scale and coordinated regional strategies. It facilitates access to federal and state funds for regional initiatives. However, aligning the diverse interests of multiple member jurisdictions and ensuring an equitable distribution of benefits can be challenging. Strong communication and a shared regional vision are essential for success.

Factors Influencing the Choice of Structure

The selection of the most appropriate organizational structure for an economic development ecosystem is influenced by a variety of contextual factors. The size and complexity of the community, region, or state play a significant role; larger, more diverse economies might necessitate more decentralized and collaborative models to effectively address varied needs and opportunities. Conversely, smaller communities might find a more centralized approach to be efficient.

The specific economic goals and priorities of the community or region are important in determining the structure. Whether the focus is on attracting large businesses, nurturing entrepreneurship, or developing specific industry clusters will dictate the type of structure that can best support these objectives. For instance, fostering a startup ecosystem might benefit from a decentralized network that provides ample support and resources for entrepreneurs.

The resources available to the community, both financial and in terms of human capital, will also constrain the options for organizational structure. Communities with limited resources might need to leverage existing organizations or adopt more streamlined models, potentially through public-private partnerships to share the burden.

The political landscape and history of the area are critical considerations. Existing political dynamics, the level of trust among stakeholders, and any historical precedents of collaboration (or lack thereof) will influence the feasibility and effectiveness of different structures. Overcoming entrenched political interests or building trust among partners might be necessary steps in choosing and implementing a particular model.

Finally, the desired level of centralization versus decentralization is a fundamental choice that will shape the organizational structure. A community that values efficiency and top-down control might favor a centralized model, while one that prioritizes innovation, local autonomy, and broad participation might opt for a decentralized network. Understanding the trade-offs between these approaches is essential for making an informed decision.

The next section summarizes the most common tools and structures identified in the case studies and outlines how they might inform ecosystem design in Oregon.

What We Learned from Case Study States (Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, Colorado, Kentucky)

Many states have taken deliberate, structured approaches to managing their economic development ecosystems with many driven by executive leadership at the gubernatorial level. Their strategies differ—reflecting differences in geography, governance, and political culture—but they share a common feature: each has defined a clear role for state-level coordination and made strategic choices about how economic development functions are organized and delivered.

To better understand how Oregon might strengthen its own approach, we examined five states: Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, Colorado, and Kentucky. These were selected because they represent a range of institutional models, geographic settings, and policy tools. Some are centralized, others more regionally distributed. Some focus on distressed areas, others on industry sectors or regional innovation. Together, they offer a diverse set of models Oregon can learn from. Specifically:

- **Pennsylvania** was chosen for its strong executive leadership in economic development.
- **New York** was selected to find insights into effective regional approaches.
- **Michigan** was picked for its public-private partnerships.
- **Colorado** was chosen to look at a model focusing on high-tech information ecosystems and supporting rural communities.
- **Kentucky** was selected for its emphasis on rural communities.

This work was not intended to evaluate which state performs "best." Rather, it was designed to identify practical tools, structures, and strategies that have been implemented elsewhere – and that Oregon might consider adapting if appropriate. The research was based on publicly available materials, including strategic plans, agency reports, legislative documents, and economic development overviews produced by the states themselves. We focused on the role of government agencies, quasi-public entities, and nonprofit partners in delivering and coordinating economic development activities.

Our review looked at:

- Governance structures and the role of central coordinating agencies
- Regional and local implementation mechanisms
- Public-private partnerships and nonprofit delivery partners
- Urban and rural development strategies
- Alignment with workforce, infrastructure, and revitalization goals
- Legal authorities, where relevant

Across the five states, we found a variety of tools and approaches that support coordination, focus, and impact. These include regional economic planning bodies tied to state funding (as in New York), statutorily empowered development authorities (as in Pennsylvania), formal regional partnerships with flexible implementation mandates (as in Kentucky and Colorado), and state-level strategies that integrate place-based investments (as in Michigan).

These examples are not offered as blueprints. Oregon's political culture, economic structure, and administrative history differ in important ways. But, like a telescope in an astronomy experiment, these tools are effective when the conditions are right and can be valuable additions to Oregon's policy toolbox. Oregon can evaluate, adapt, or repurpose these methods to suit its own goals, institutional capacity, and regions.

We first describe the different types of organizational structures that states have and discuss their characteristics, advantages, and disadvantages. We then go over what tools and lessons were learned from the case study states.

Case Study State Organizational Structure Analysis

This section uses the above discussed organizational structures and applies them to each case study state.

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania's economic development ecosystem is anchored by a strong state-level department (the Department of Community and Economic Development, or DCED) that provides centralized leadership with significant input from the governor. This public sector-driven, hierarchical structure at the state level is complemented by a broad network of regional and local authorities.

Every county has at least one economic development organization (often an Industrial Development Authority or nonprofit corporation) enabled by state law to issue bonds and finance projects. These county-level and multi-county entities serve as Regional Development Organizations, acting as intermediaries that deliver state programs (for example, certified county economic development organizations help administer state loans and grants).

Pennsylvania also makes extensive use of public-private partnerships. At the statewide level, the nonprofit Team Pennsylvania Foundation—co-chaired by the Governor and a private-sector leader—convenes business, government, and civic partners to advance economic priorities. Major cities employ hybrid models as well (for instance, Philadelphia's PIDC is a jointly governed city-chamber economic development corporation). Overall, Pennsylvania's system is primarily centralized under DCED's guidance, but it leverages regional authorities and public-private collaborations to implement projects at the local level.

A potential challenge is ensuring coordination across this diverse landscape of agencies, though programs like the CEDO network aim to align local efforts with state strategy.

New York

New York's ecosystem features a centralized state authority combined with structured regional input. The lead entity is Empire State Development (ESD), a state public-benefit corporation that serves as the central economic development agency. ESD's hierarchical oversight is balanced by an innovative regional framework: the state is divided into ten Regional Economic Development Councils (REDCs), which are multi-sector advisory boards that develop regional plans and influence the distribution of state funding.

This approach blends a Public Sector Driven, top-down strategy with Decentralized/Networked collaboration at the regional level. Each REDC is essentially a public-private partnership body—composed of local business leaders, academia, and government officials—that prioritizes projects for state support in its region.

At the local level, city and county governments have their own development entities, including Industrial Development Agencies (IDAs) and local development corporations, which implement projects and provide incentives in alignment with state programs. New York also coordinates efforts through formal mechanisms like the Consolidated Funding Application, where state agencies and REDCs work together on project funding decisions. In summary, New York's model is state-driven and centralized in oversight, but with robust regional public-private councils ensuring that bottom-up input guides investment across diverse areas of the state. One note is that this multi-layered system requires careful alignment of state and regional goals, which New York manages through the REDC process and governor's directives.

Michigan

Michigan organizes its economic development ecosystem around a public-private partnership at the state level as the primary driver. The Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) is the flagship agency—it was established in 1999 via an interlocal agreement and operates as a public-private partnership rather than a typical state department. MEDC leads business attraction, community development, and even tourism branding (e.g. the "Pure Michigan" campaign) with a centralized structure, but its governance involves both state and private stakeholders (overseen by the Michigan Strategic Fund, a public board of appointees). This gives Michigan a somewhat Centralized/Hierarchical framework at the top, while still engaging the private sector in decision-making.

Alongside MEDC, the state's Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity coordinates workforce programs and the Office of Rural Prosperity, ensuring public agencies align with MEDC's economic goals. At the regional level, Michigan is divided into 14 planning regions under the Michigan Association of Regions, which function as Regional Development Organizations to coordinate multi-county economic strategies.

These regional councils, along with local workforce development boards and economic development partners, create a decentralized network of collaboration that feeds into the state's plans. In practical terms, Michigan's system is led by a state-coordinated PPP (the MEDC), supported by regional councils that help tailor state initiatives to local needs, and by public agencies that integrate workforce and community development efforts. This blended model leverages private-sector agility through MEDC while maintaining public accountability via the Strategic Fund and regional input, though it requires clear roles to avoid overlap.

Colorado

Colorado's economic development ecosystem can be characterized as state-led but highly collaborative, embodying both Public Sector Driven and Decentralized/Networked elements. The Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade (OEDIT) is the central state agency, operating under the Governor's Office to drive strategy and coordinate programs statewide. This provides a clear hierarchical leadership and integration with the Governor's priorities.

At the same time, Colorado places a strong emphasis on regional and local partnerships. The state works with regional development organizations such as Councils of Governments and federally designated Economic Development Districts that cover multiple counties (e.g. Region 9 Economic Development District in Southwest Colorado), which help plan and implement economic initiatives across jurisdictions.

In urban areas, influential public-private partnerships like the Metro Denver Economic Development Corporation bring together counties, cities, and the business community to promote regional growth. Many counties and cities have their own economic development councils or partnerships (for example, the Adams County Regional Economic Partnership and others), which are often business-led but coordinate closely with OEDIT programs.

This networked approach means that while Colorado has a central strategy, much of the delivery is decentralized through regional collaboration and private-sector engagement. In summary, Colorado's model is a hybrid: a strong central agency sets direction and offers resources, but implementation is carried out in partnership with regional coalitions and local public-private entities, allowing for flexibility and local initiative within an overall coordinated framework. This collaborative structure helps adapt to Colorado's diverse regional economies, though it also relies on strong communication channels to keep state and local efforts aligned.

Kentucky

Kentucky's economic development system features a centralized state authority coupled with formal regional structures and partnerships. The Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development (KCED) is the primary state agency leading job creation and business investment efforts, functioning as a cabinet-level department driving policy and programs from the top. This public sector-driven, hierarchical model at the state level is anchored by KCED's divisions focused on business attraction, existing industry support, entrepreneurship (KY Innovation), workforce, and international trade, all coordinated under the Cabinet's leadership.

Complementing this central agency is a network of 15 Area Development Districts (ADDs)—multi-county regional planning and development organizations that provide support and help implement economic initiatives across the state. These ADDs exemplify the Regional Development Organization model, ensuring that rural and regional needs are incorporated into statewide plans. Coordination between the state and these regions (and among various agencies) is institutionalized through bodies like the Kentucky Economic Development Partnership Board and the Kentucky Workforce Innovation Board, which bring together public officials and private sector representatives. Notably, Kentucky's Partnership Board includes business leaders alongside government, effectively making the governance of KCED a public-private partnership in itself.

Additionally, Kentucky often utilizes public-private partnerships for project delivery—for example, working with private investors on infrastructure or using nonprofit intermediaries for site development—to expand the state's capacity for economic development. In essence, Kentucky's structure is state-centric (centralized public sector) in vision and funding, but it actively devolves planning and implementation through regional districts and engages private stakeholders in boards and projects. This approach has helped Kentucky address local needs through its ADDs, though it requires ongoing collaboration between the central Cabinet and the regional/local entities to ensure unified goals and avoid gaps in service delivery.

Table 1 summarizes the primary and secondary ecosystem structures for the case study states.

Table 1: Case Study State's Organizational Structure Table Summary

State	Primary Structure(s)	Secondary Structure(s)
Pennsylvania	Centralized/Hierarchical; Public Sector Driven (strong state department oversight)	Public-Private Partnerships; Regional Development Organizations (state-local partnerships and local/regional authorities)
New York	Centralized/Hierarchical; Public Sector Driven (state authority leads strategy)	Public-Private Partnerships; Regional Development Organization (regional councils with mixed public-private leadership)
Michigan	Public-Private Partnership; Centralized/Hierarchical (state's lead agency is a PPP)	Regional Development Organization; Decentralized/Networked (multi-county regional councils and collaborative boards)
Colorado	Public Sector Driven; Decentralized/Networked (state-led but collaboration-focused)	Public-Private Partnerships; Regional Development Organization (local/regional EDO partnerships and councils)
Kentucky	Public Sector Driven; Centralized/Hierarchical (state cabinet leads)	Public-Private Partnerships; Regional Development Organization (state board with private sector input, multi-county districts)
Oregon	Decentralized/Networked	Public Sector Driven, Regional Development Organization

Source: Institute for Policy Research and Engagement

A Toolkit for Ecosystem Design: Lessons from Other States

The case study states reviewed – Pennsylvania, New York, Michigan, Colorado, and Kentucky – offered a range of policy tools and structural strategies that help them coordinate and deliver economic development more effectively. While no two states are alike, several common elements emerged. These elements can serve as a practical toolkit that Oregon can consider, adapt, or repurpose based on its own needs and context.

First, each state maintains clear state-level leadership, often directly involving the Governor's office as a top priority. In every case, a central agency is empowered to lead and align statewide efforts. These include the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, New York's Empire State Development, the Colorado Office of Economic Development and International Trade, and the Kentucky Cabinet for Economic Development. These agencies not only coordinate programs and funding but often serve as the primary point of contact for both public and private partners. Their leadership ensures that economic development goals are tied to broader state priorities and guided by a consistent strategy.

Second, regional and local partnerships are formalized and empowered. Rather than relying on informal networks, these states have built structured regional frameworks to implement their goals. For example, New York has ten Regional Economic Development Councils that develop regional strategies and compete for state funding based on how well their plans align with state goals. Kentucky relies on Area Development Districts to support multi-county planning and implementation. These structures promote both horizontal and vertical alignment -- between local and regional actors, and between regions and the state.

Third, each state employs comprehensive strategies that go beyond recruitment. The emphasis is not solely on attracting businesses from elsewhere, but on retaining existing businesses and helping them expand. States align their strategies with workforce development, infrastructure investment, housing availability, and quality-of-life concerns. In Michigan, for example, economic development efforts are place-based and focused on revitalizing distressed areas, integrating land use, infrastructure, and workforce in a single strategy.

Fourth, workforce development is a central focus. States understand that economic development depends on talent availability. Colorado's approach to rural economic development includes direct alignment with community colleges and sector-based workforce partnerships. Public agencies often work alongside education institutions and employers to ensure training aligns with economic goals and regional needs.

Fifth, states recognize the distinct needs of urban and rural areas. Colorado stands out for its Rural Colorado initiative, which is led by a dedicated Rural Opportunity Office within the Office of Economic Development and International Trade. These strategies acknowledge that rural communities require different tools than urban ones, and often require more tailored, flexible approaches. Kentucky has taken a similar approach in eastern Kentucky, where collaborative networks like Shaping Our Appalachian Region (SOAR) have supported broadband expansion and community revitalization in historically underserved areas.

Sixth, public-private partnerships are used to expand capacity. Nonprofit partners, industry organizations, and regional development entities are often enlisted to help deliver services, broker investments, and convene stakeholders. These partnerships allow states to be more flexible and responsive, particularly in areas where state staffing or direct control is limited.

Finally, states offer a wide range of funding tools and incentives. These include loans, tax credits, flexible grants, and site development support. Pennsylvania's Industrial Development Authorities play a particularly strong role in this area, helping finance hospitals, manufacturing facilities, and infrastructure that create jobs and expand capacity. Many states also tie funding to performance metrics, using outcomes to guide future allocations and refine strategy.

Takeaways

Oregon's economic development ecosystem is broad, active, and filled with capable partners. In a 2022 assessment of Oregon's economic development ecosystem, IPRE identified more than 850 organizations that are actively working on economic development statewide. While each contributes to local and regional efforts, these actors operate within a system that lacks a unified statewide strategy, shared outcomes, or clear coordination.

Oregon's ecosystem primarily functions as a Decentralized/Networked model. Instead of a single central authority with strategic oversight, economic development work is carried out by a diverse and loosely connected network of state agencies (like Business Oregon, Housing and Community Services, and the Employment Department), regional economic development organizations (such as Oregon Economic Development Districts), and local governments. These entities engage in economic development independently or through ad hoc partnerships, but there isn't a mechanism for aligning their efforts or even for encouraging them to collaborate.

At the state level, Business Oregon serves as the main public economic development agency, placing Oregon somewhat within a Public Sector Driven model. However, Business Oregon doesn't currently function as a central coordinating agency, nor does it currently have the authority to establish statewide priorities or align local and regional actors. Its role is largely programmatic, administering incentive programs, grants, loans, and technical assistance. No single office or entity is tasked with setting statewide economic development priorities, and existing strategic initiatives (like the Equitable Economic Recovery Plan) are episodic rather than structurally integrated across the full ecosystem.

Oregon also uses a Regional Development Organization structure through its network of federally designated Economic Development Districts (EDDs). While these cover most of the state and work on regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies (CEDS), their capacity varies and they aren't formally integrated into a statewide coordination framework. Additionally, local workforce development boards, regional chambers of commerce, and public-private groups contribute to implementation at different scales, but their connections to state leadership are often informal and inconsistent.

In contrast, stronger economic development ecosystems in other states typically rely on a more structured model. These models feature state-level leadership that provides clear direction, establishes outcomes, and ensures alignment across regions and institutions. The tools observed in these successful systems form the core of effective economic development, providing leadership at the state level, coordination regionally, and implementation flexibility locally. They enable tailored strategies for both rural and urban communities and help integrate economic development with workforce, housing, and infrastructure systems. Crucially, these states organize their ecosystems around clear goals and empower their coordinating agencies with the authority and capacity to achieve them.

Oregon doesn't need to adopt these models wholesale; however, each offers tested components that could strengthen Oregon's own approach. Before evaluating or applying these tools, Oregon must first define what it wants its economic development system to accomplish. Strategy comes before structure, and structure is only useful when built around clear priorities.

Table 2: Oregon's Organizational Structure Summary

State	Primary Structure(s)	Secondary Structure(s)
Oregon	Decentralized/Networked	Public Sector Driven, Regional Development Organization

Source: Institute for Policy Research and Engagement

Recommendations for Oregon

The preceding sections have outlined the strengths and weaknesses of Oregon's current economic development ecosystem, highlighted structural trends and risks, and drawn insights from five case study states. While Oregon's context is unique, the lessons from other states offer useful direction. The following recommendations aim to build on Oregon's existing assets and commitments while addressing the structural gaps that limit statewide coordination, impact, and competitiveness.

Transition to a centralized/hierarchical and public sector driven primary ecosystem structure.

Oregon should shift from its current loosely coordinated network to a more centrally structured ecosystem model, blending centralized leadership with empowered regional implementation.

- **Primary Structure:** Centralized/Hierarchical + Public Sector Driven
  - Led by the Governor with a designated coordinating agency (e.g., Business Oregon).
  - Features clear statewide strategy, priorities, and performance metrics.
- **Secondary Structure:** Regional Development Organization Model
  - Empowers regional entities to implement initiatives within the statewide framework.
  - Formalizes roles, expectations, and alignment mechanisms for regional and local partners.

Oregon's current decentralized model is diffuse and lacks strategic alignment. A more centralized structure could reduce duplication, improve coordination, and enable the achievement of statewide priorities. Regional implementation could preserve local responsiveness and innovation while supporting broader state goals.

Make economic development a central state priority.

As outlined in The Foundation of Oregon's Priorities section, Oregon's current state priorities—housing, education, and behavioral health—are deeply connected to the strength of its economy. Economic development should be formally recognized as a fourth pillar, with commensurate leadership and attention. Without focused investment in job creation and business growth, the state will struggle to generate the revenue and social stability needed to achieve its other goals.

Establish a statewide economic development strategy.

As described in the Takeaways section, Oregon's current ecosystem is decentralized and loosely connected. Developing a clear, coordinated strategy—led by the Governor and housed within a central agency such as Business Oregon—would create alignment across agencies, regions, and funding streams. This strategy should define statewide goals and outcomes while allowing for regional flexibility in implementation.

This approach aligns with Business Oregon's Priority 4: "Lead Development in Oregon's Economic Development Strategies." As the state's economic development agency, Business Oregon is uniquely positioned to orchestrate prosperity and drive a shared vision across Oregon's diverse regional economies.

Clearly define economic development outcomes.

Economic development should not be treated as a vague aspiration. It must be tied to specific, measurable outcomes: job growth, wage gains, business retention, rural revitalization, and more. Defining these outcomes publicly and concretely allows for accountability, public support, and focused policy design.

Develop alignment tools to support coordination.

States like New York and Kentucky have created formal frameworks -- such as regional development councils and area development districts -- to align local planning with state priorities. Oregon could explore similar tools to improve vertical coordination across government levels, and horizontal coordination across sectors. This may include shared planning frameworks, designated conveners, or resource allocation tied to regional collaboration.

Embed economic development into broader systems.

Case study states have shown the value of integrating economic development with workforce development, housing, and infrastructure. Michigan's place-based revitalization efforts, for instance, coordinate land use, education, and business development to support distressed areas. Oregon could explore how strategy can be embedded into adjacent systems to increase impact and avoid duplication.

Fund shared planning capacity, especially in rural regions.

Effective economic development requires technical capacity -- grant writing, project development, interagency coordination for example -- that is unevenly distributed across Oregon. States like Kentucky and Colorado have invested in regional planning support structures that help under-resourced areas compete for funding and implement complex projects. Oregon could consider a similar investment in regional planning infrastructure, particularly in rural communities.

Create statewide metrics to track ecosystem health.

Several case study states use performance metrics not only to measure program success but to assess the health of the ecosystem as a whole. Oregon should develop and publish shared metrics -- such as job quality, project pipeline, capital access, and geographic equity -- to track progress and guide adjustments.

These recommendations are intended to guide discussion, not prescribe a specific model. They build from Oregon's current strengths, respond to persistent challenges, and draw directly from the practical experience of other states. The recommendations share a belief in deliberate design: the idea that economic development is not something that happens on the margins, but something that must be organized, resourced, and governed with intention.

Ultimately, Oregon does not need to replicate the systems of other states. But Oregon does need to make deliberate choices about the kind of economic outcomes it wants to pursue and design its ecosystem to support those outcomes. That work includes identifying statewide priorities, aligning institutions, and equipping regional partners with the tools and support they need to deliver on shared goals.

Conclusion

Oregon is well-positioned to develop a stronger, more intentional economic development strategy. The state has the institutional capacity, public commitment, and regional talent to build a system that reflects its values and supports its long-term prosperity. The state also has models to draw from—tools and frameworks already tested in other states, and lessons learned from its own experience.

However, without coordinated action, Oregon risks further decline in competitiveness, job creation, and revenue. A fragmented ecosystem, however well-intentioned, simply cannot compete with states that organize deliberately around their economic goals; without strategy, outcomes are left to chance, and without leadership, resources are misaligned.

The core recommendation of this report is for Oregon to shift from a loosely coordinated network model to a more hierarchical ecosystem model, with the Governor's Office providing strategic leadership and Business Oregon serving as the coordinating and implementation hub. This does not mean eliminating local control or regional responsiveness. Rather, it means defining statewide goals and enabling local and regional partners to align their work within a common framework—supported by shared tools, resources, and accountability.

Oregon's recent *Equitable Economic Recovery Plan* offers a step in this direction. Developed by Business Oregon following the COVID-19 pandemic, the plan outlined six strategic imperatives to support a more inclusive, resilient economy—including broadband expansion, childcare access, workforce reskilling, and support for small and BIPOC-owned businesses. However, the plan did not result in a fully coordinated statewide framework. It remains one of several valuable but disconnected efforts.

Any effective strategy must begin by clarifying what outcomes the state wants to achieve. Those outcomes flow from priorities, and those priorities could be set by a central entity accountable to the public. The Governor, as the only statewide elected executive, is best positioned to set this vision. Business Oregon, as the state's principal economic development agency, is well positioned to coordinate and implement it. Still, economic development is often misunderstood by the public, and opposition to new initiatives can arise from confusion about their purpose. Oregon must therefore invest not just in good policy, but in clear communication.

A coordinated ecosystem will not solve every challenge. But without one, Oregon will continue to operate without direction, without metrics, and without the structural capacity to compete effectively with other states.

The next step is to move from diagnosis to design. While agreement on every detail is not required, a shared commitment is necessary to move forward.

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Protect. Promote. Prosper.

Oregon State Board of Agriculture
635 Capitol St NE, Salem, OR 97301-2532
503.986.4552 | Oregon.gov/ODA

December 19, 2025

The Honorable Tina Kotek
Governor of Oregon
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Governor Kotek,

On behalf of the State Board of Agriculture, I write to express our support for your December 3, 2025, announcement of the Prosperity Roadmap and to ensure that Oregon's founding traded sector, Agriculture and Food & Beverage, is fully integrated into this effort. Agriculture and Food & Beverage have long been cornerstones of Oregon's prosperity, supporting more than 531,000 jobs, anchoring economic activity in every county, and generating an estimated $2.4 billion in exports with an overall $42 billion economic impact to the state annually.

On the same day you announced the Prosperity Roadmap, our Board heard from a panel of orchardists at our quarterly Board Meeting in Hood River. Their message was urgent: rising labor costs, complex regulatory frameworks, and regulatory disparities between Oregon and neighboring states have created a challenging economic environment that threatens the long-term viability of one of Oregon's longest standing and iconic agricultural sectors. A November 2025 Oregon State University study highlighted the growing burden of regulation costs, finding that small pear growers pay as much as $696 per acre in regulatory compliance costs alone, representing as much as 6.6% of total revenue and placing significant strain on already thin operating margins.

We share these challenges with you to highlight that Agriculture and Food & Beverage sit at the intersection of many of your prosperity initiatives: workforce, technology, transportation, energy, permitting, land-use, and domestic and international trade policies. Our sector's perspective and lived experience are uniquely positioned to help inform strategies that strengthen the entire economic system.

We share your assessment: Oregon's economy requires a deliberate and aggressive strategy to retain businesses and accelerate growth. The reports we heard in Hood River are not isolated. Producers statewide report that escalating input costs, regulatory fatigue, and intensifying global competition have narrowed profit margins and pushed family farms to a critical inflection point. As the next generation questions whether they can afford to continue, the consequences threaten the economic stability of Oregon's rural communities.

We believe the Oregon Prosperity Council is the right vehicle to turn these challenges into opportunity. For the Roadmap to succeed, however, it must reflect not only emerging industries, but also the natural-resource economy that provides stability, scale, and statewide reach. We

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respectfully request the appointment of a representative from the Agriculture and Food & Beverage sector to the Council.

This partnership is essential for three reasons:

- **A stabilizing traded sector:** While technology fuels innovation and high growth, it can be cyclical. Agriculture and Food & Beverage provide durable, statewide economic output sustaining communities across the state through market shifts and economic downturns.
- **A fully integrated rural–urban value chain:** Agriculture uniquely connects rural production, urban processing, and global trade through Oregon's ports. Including this perspective ensures the Prosperity Roadmap advances a truly "One Oregon" economy.
- **Land-use and site-readiness expertise:** We noted your emphasis on industrial site readiness. As stewards of working lands, the agricultural community can help the state navigate land-use tensions in ways that expand economic opportunity while preserving long-term sector viability.

Agriculture and Food & Beverage representation on the council is a necessity for a long-term sustainable economy. The State Board of Agriculture stands ready to partner with you and contribute immediately to the success of the Prosperity Roadmap.

Sincerely,

Elin Miller, Chair
State Board of Agriculture

CC:

Lisa Charpilloz Hanson, Director, Oregon Department of Agriculture
Geoff Huntington, Senior Natural Resources Advisor, Office of Governor Tina Kotek
Courtney Crowell, Regional Solutions Coordinator, Office of Governor Tina Kotek
Sarah Means, Workforce, Labor, and Higher Education Advisor, Office of Governor Tina Kotek
Kelly Scannell Brooks, Transportation, Infrastructure, and Economic Development Advisor, Office of Governor Tina Kotek
Vince Porter, Deputy Chief of Staff for Public Administration, Office of Governor Tina Kotek

OREGON WORKFORCE
PARTNERSHIP

Recommendations to Advance Oregon's Prosperity Roadmap and Modernize Oregon's Workforce Leadership

Executive Summary

Governor Kotek's Prosperity Roadmap sets near-term administrative actions and a 2027 legislative framework to retain and grow businesses, catalyze job creation, and accelerate statewide economic growth. Oregon's workforce system—governed by the Workforce and Talent Development Board (WTDB) and delivered through nine Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDBs) and WorkSource Oregon centers—offers a platform to align governance, performance, and industry engagement with the Roadmap (via the approved 2024–2028 WIOA Combined State Plan.)

This brief proposes eight actions in two time horizons (≤6 months and the 2027 legislative session). The proposed actions borrow proven elements from other states where public workforce system resources, including TANF, SNAP E&T, and WIOA programs are aligned under a streamlined state/regional governance structure with unified performance reporting.

The recommendations also introduces a new regional industry council model staffed by LWDBs. Councils consolidate industry engagement across K–12, community colleges, and universities, creating a single employer-led table to identify needs, inform curricula, scale work-based learning, and measure results.

Recommendations

1. Support Prosperity Programs (LC130)

The $15M state investment in workforce development will support not only preparing people to qualify for employment but will also support talent development within existing companies to ensure they have the talent needed to stay in business and/or potentially expand.

2. Clarify & Modernize Executive Order 13-08

Rationale: EO 13-08's intent—reducing fragmentation, empowering LWDBs, reestablishing roles and responsibilities—remains sound but needs modernization to align with the Roadmap.

Near-term (≤6 months): Issue an EO 13-08 Modernization Addendum that (a) codifies the roles and responsibilities of LWDBs as accountable resource coordinators and conveners for sector partnerships; (b) clarifies WTDB's statewide policy authority and multi-agency implementation; and (c) creates a joint performance compact linked to Roadmap KPIs.

2027 session: Codify WTDB multi-partner policy authority, unified reporting, co-investment rules, and data-sharing standards across public workforce system partners, including HECC-OWI, OED, DHS, VR, BOLI and Business Oregon.

3. Streamline State-Level Governance & Program Administration

Rationale: WTDB's Continuous Improvement Committee (CIC) calls for clearer authority and exploration of WIOA reorganization; the Roadmap adds a Chief Prosperity Officer (CPO) and Prosperity Council to anchor accountability.

Near-term (≤6 months): Stand up an Office of Workforce System Performance to unify policy implementation, performance management, and reporting across programs; launch a unified scorecard.

2027 session: Consider administrative consolidation of programs that make up Oregon's public workforce system.

4. Align TANF Employment & Training with WIOA (Borrowing Best Practices)

Rationale: Aligning TANF E&T with WIOA improves co-enrollment, case management, and outcomes. Texas administers TANF Choices through the Workforce Commission and local Boards; Florida integrates TANF/SNAP E&T in its Combined Plan; Michigan's PATH is co-run by DHHS and LEO; Colorado Works integrates with workforce centers.

Near-term (≤6 months): Pilot TANF–WIOA co-enrollment in two-three regions with shared intake, single employment plans, co-funded supports, and joint reporting; execute MOUs to co-locate TANF employment services in WorkSource centers.

2027 session: Statutorily authorize TANF E&T alignment with WIOA and empower WTDB to set cross-program policies for co-enrollment, performance, infrastructure funding, and shared provider lists.

5. Build a Unified Performance & Data System Tied to the Roadmap

Near-term (≤6 months): Launch an Oregon Talent Dashboard that mirrors Colorado's (top jobs, credential gaps, equity metrics, regional outcomes) and publish unified WorkSource metrics quarterly.

2027 session: Mandate interagency and system partner data-sharing agreements and align statutory performance reporting with the WIOA plan cycle.

6. Lift Up the WorkSource Oregon Data System

Near-term (≤6 months): Ensure the new system can accommodate the functionality to enroll all high school graduates and post secondary graduates into the new WorkSource Oregon data system.

2027 session; codify the requirement to enroll all high school and post secondary graduates into the WorkSource Oregon data system.

7. Tie Workforce Delivery to Fast-Tracked Projects & Investment Tools

Near-term (≤6 months): Require workforce execution plans for fast-tracked economic development projects under the Roadmap (talent pipelines, training seats, supportive services, LWDB accountability); integrate WorkSource business services into Business Oregon outreach and regional solutions activities.

2027 session: Modernize incentives to link state support with local hiring, training, and job-quality metrics reported via the Talent Dashboard.

8. Regional Industry Councils (RICs): Consolidating Employer Engagement Across Education & Workforce

Purpose: Create employer-led Regional Industry Councils (RICs) for high-demand sectors (e.g., Health, Construction, IT/Analytics, Advanced Manufacturing) staffed by LWDBs. RICs provide a single table for industry to articulate regional skill and talent needs, streamline engagement across K–12, community colleges, and universities, and establish a curriculum feedback loop and outcomes measurement.

Charter & Governance

Charter: RICs are convened and staffed by LWDBs under WTDB policy; co-chaired by employers and education leaders (CC/University/ESD).

Scope: Identify occupational demand, skills and credential requirements, job-quality standards, and work-based learning opportunities.

Authority: Recommend curriculum updates to K–12 CTE, community college programs, and university departments; advise on program approval and capacity targets; inform industry changes and outlook.

Alignment: RICs operate within labor-shed aligned regions and report to WTDB and the CPO's Prosperity Council to tie outcomes to Roadmap KPIs.

Membership

Employers (anchor firms, SMEs, and unions where applicable).

LWDB leadership and sector partnership staff (convener, data lead).

Education partners: ESD superintendents/CTE directors, community college deans, university department chairs, adult education and apprenticeship sponsors.

Public partners: HECC-OWI, OED, Business Oregon, VR, DHS (TANF), local governments/regional solutions.

Operating Model

Quarterly RIC meetings with a published agenda, minutes, and action trackers; annual sector action plans.

Data backbone via the Oregon Talent Dashboard and regional LMI to identify top jobs, skills gaps, and equity gaps.

Curriculum Feedback Loop: standardized templates for competency frameworks, course/module changes, and equipment needs; shared calendar for program review cycles.

Work-Based Learning: set targets for paid internships, youth apprenticeships, clinicals, and OJT placements; align funding and braided supports (WIOA, TANF, Perkins, state grants, etc.).

Outcome Measurement: common KPIs—enrollment, completion, credential attainment, employment, wages, retention, employer satisfaction; quarterly publication on the dashboard.

Equity & Access: track participation and outcomes for priority populations; ensure wraparound supports (childcare, transportation, tools, stipends).

Implementation Timeline

Near-term (≤6 months):

- 0–90 days: Identify priority sectors per WTDB Talent Assessment; select pilot regions; recruit co-chairs; approve RIC charters.
- 90–180 days: Publish first sector action plans and curriculum feedback packages; launch shared intake for paid work-based learning (youth + adults); start dashboard reporting [2, 17].

2027 session: Codify RICs and sector partnerships in statute; establish multi-agency funding contribution and performance-based grants tied to Roadmap outcomes.

SUMMARY

Near-Term Action Plan (January–June 2026)

1. Issue and pass Prosperity Programs bill
2. Issue EO 13-08 Modernization Addendum (roles, authority, performance compact)
3. Stand up an Office of Workforce System Performance to unify policy implementation, performance management, and reporting across programs; launch a unified agency scorecard.
4. Launch TANF–WIOA co-enrollment pilots with MOUs and co-location in WorkSource center
5. Stand up Office of Workforce System Performance and unified scorecard; release Oregon Talent Dashboard MVP
6. Require WorkSource Oregon to build a data system capable of enrolling all high school or post secondary graduates

7. Require workforce execution plans for fast-tracked economic development projects under the Roadmap (talent pipelines, training seats, supportive services, LWDB accountability); integrate WorkSource business services into Business Oregon outreach and regional solutions activities.
8. Form initial RICs in two pilot regions; deliver curriculum feedback packages and work-based learning targets.

Proposals for the 2027 Legislative Session

1. Codify WTDB multi-partner policy authority, unified reporting, co-investment rules, and data-sharing standards across public workforce system partners, including HECC-OWI, OED, DHS, VR, BOLI and Business Oregon
2. Consider administrative consolidation of programs that make up Oregon's public workforce system.
3. Statutorily authorize TANF E&T alignment with WIOA and empower WTDB to set cross-program policies for co-enrollment, performance, infrastructure funding, and shared provider lists.
4. Mandate interagency and system partner data-sharing agreements and align statutory performance reporting with the WIOA plan cycle.
5. Codify the requirement to enroll all high school and post secondary graduates into the WorkSource Oregon data system.
6. Modernize incentives to link state support with local hiring, training, and job-quality metrics reported via the Talent Dashboard.
7. Create Sector Partnership & RIC statute with flexible multi-agency funding and performance-based grants

Appendices

- A. Draft EO 13-08 Modernization Addendum – bullets for roles, authorities, and performance compact.
- B. Sample MOU Outline – DHS (TANF), HECC-OWI (WIOA), LWDBs for co-location and co-enrollment.
- C. Regional Industry Council Charter Template – purpose, governance, membership, KPIs.
- D. Unified Metrics Dictionary – definitions and data sources for dashboard reporting.

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[4] OPB coverage of Prosperity Roadmap (Dec 2, 2025): opb.org/article/2025/12/02/oregon-governor-tina-kotek-ready-tackle-state-lousy-business-reputation/

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TINA KOTEK
GOVERNOR

December 30, 2025

Colonel Dale Caswell, Jr.
Commander and District Engineer
Portland District
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
333 SW 1st Avenue
Portland, OR 97204

RE: Support for NXTClean Fuels Project at Port Westward, Oregon

Dear Colonel Caswell,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed NXTClean Fuels facility at Port Westward in Columbia County, Oregon. This $3 billion private investment represents a significant opportunity for rural Oregon, both economically and environmentally, and has undergone rigorous review and permitting at the state and county levels.

NXTClean Fuels has worked closely with state agencies and local communities to ensure the project meets, and in many cases exceeds, Oregon's environmental protection standards. The facility has received a Removal-Fill Permit from the Oregon Department of State Lands and a 401 Water Quality Certification from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. It also underwent a comprehensive Cleaner Air Oregon review, which confirmed that local communities will not be adversely impacted by construction or operation. Public engagement has been robust, and the company has demonstrated a strong commitment to transparency and responsiveness.

The project is expected to generate over 3,000 union construction jobs and 240 permanent positions, with thousands more indirect jobs across the region. It will also contribute more than $45 million annually in tax revenue to the State of Oregon and Columbia County, and over $5.5 million in fees to the Port of Columbia County. These are meaningful impacts for our rural communities.

From an environmental standpoint, NXTClean Fuels will produce Renewable Diesel and Sustainable Aviation Fuel, displacing up to 750 million gallons of fossil fuels annually and reducing over 7 million tons of carbon dioxide emissions. The facility's ultra-low carbon intensity fuels, derived from recycled organic feedstocks, align with Oregon's climate goals and offer immediate air quality benefits.

Additionally, the company has committed to restoring over 470 acres of adjacent land into vibrant wetlands. This will be one of the largest private restoration efforts along the Columbia River. The initiative will enhance habitat, improve water quality, and provide flood mitigation benefits.

Given the extensive state-level vetting and the broad coalition of support from labor organizations, environmental leaders, local governments, and business groups, I respectfully urge the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to give full and timely consideration to this project. Oregon stands ready to support the federal review process and collaborate to ensure that this project moves forward responsibly and efficiently.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Governor Tina Kotek

TK:ta

cc: Leah Feldon, Director, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Kaitlin Lovell, Director, Oregon Department of State Lands
Brenda Bateman, Director, Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development
State Senator Suzanne Weber
State Representative Cyrus Javadi

Oregon State University

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TO: Office of Governor Tina Kotek, Business Oregon, Oregon Prosperity Council

FROM: President Jayathi Murthy, Oregon State University

DATE: January 30, 2026

RE: Oregon Prosperity Roadmap & Economic Development Strategy Framework; OSU Alignment, Gaps, and Strategic Contributions

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Oregon is at a critical economic inflection point. Population growth has slowed and the workforce is aging, private-sector and traded-sector growth continues to lag national trends. These dynamics heighten the urgency for a coordinated, statewide strategy that strengthens productivity, innovation, and workforce readiness while ensuring growth. The Prosperity Roadmap and the Oregon Economic Development Strategy Framework provide an important opportunity for aligning statewide assets around these challenges and accelerating durable, inclusive economic growth.

Oregon State University (OSU) appreciates the opportunity to provide input on the draft Oregon Economic Development Strategy Framework. As Oregon's land-grant university, OSU recognizes the importance of economic competitiveness, resilience, and shared prosperity as core to the state's future and to our institutional mission. These priorities are embedded in OSU's Prosperity Widely Shared strategic plan and guide our research, education, Extension, and economic engagement efforts statewide. In FY2024, OSU generated $3.5 billion in statewide economic impact and supported 22,141 jobs, underscoring the university's role as a pillar of Oregon's economy. OSU operates programs in all 36 Oregon counties through the OSU Statewides, ensuring and equitable access to education, innovation, and economic opportunity.

OSU's value to the Prosperity Roadmap and the Oregon Economic Development Strategy Framework can be summarized in three integrated capabilities: talent development, translation of research into companies and jobs, and statewide delivery through our Extension and regional presence. Together with the state and in partnership with Oregon's universities, community colleges, and other partners, OSU is committed to leveraging these capabilities to advance workforce readiness, innovation, and regional prosperity across Oregon.

OSU aligns closely with the vision and goals articulated in the Governor's Prosperity Roadmap and Business Oregon's Economic Development Strategy Framework and views them as an important framework for advancing Oregon's long-term economic competitiveness, resilience, and shared prosperity. As the plan moves toward implementation, OSU offers the following perspective on how the university can support and strengthen execution across key strategy areas.

Workforce and Talent Development

Workforce is a central pillar of the Prosperity Roadmap and a foundational strength of OSU. The university produces graduates aligned with priority sectors statewide and contributes directly to workforce outcomes reflected in national competitiveness benchmarks, including CNBC's Top States for Business Workforce Rank. OSU can further support implementation by aligning degree production, credentials, applied learning, and upskilling with sector and regional workforce needs, in coordination with the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), employers, and state agencies. This includes expanding work-integrated learning and employer partnerships that improve talent readiness and retention. OSU Ecampus, ranked sixth nationally, further expands this capacity by delivering flexible, high-quality online education statewide, supporting credentialing, reskilling, and upskilling for working adults and incumbent workers aligned with industry and regional needs.

OSU is the first U.S. university to offer both M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in AI and is the #3 producer of engineering-based computer science bachelor's degrees nationally—directly aligned with Oregon's priority sectors. OSU's economic impact data underscores this role as a workforce engine. The university has more than 238,000 alumni, with 134,592 living and working in Oregon, generating an estimated $258.5 billion in lifetime economic impact and supporting approximately 1.4 million jobs statewide. In addition, OSU plays a connective role in Oregon's higher education and workforce ecosystem, working closely with community colleges, regional partners, and state agencies to strengthen pathways from education to employment.

Company Attraction, Growth, Retention, and Innovation

OSU plays an important role in supporting company attraction, growth and retention through long-term research partnerships, applied R&D, access to specialized facilities, and deep technical expertise. These relationships often anchor companies in Oregon and enable continuous innovation. OSU's national and global industry partners also represent prime targets for business attraction and expansion, leveraging existing research and talent relationships to reduce relocation risk and accelerating integration into the state's economy. OSU spinouts anchor jobs in Oregon, including Inpria (acquired for $514M), Agility Robotics (over $550M raised), and NuScale Power (valued at $2B+). Since 2013, OSU has generated nearly 200 startups that have attracted close to $2 billion in capital investment, demonstrating the university's ability to translate research into scalable companies. These firms have the potential to grow and remain in Oregon when supported by the right mix of capital, infrastructure, and long-term ecosystem support.

The State of Oregon supports several programs that provide long-term, sustainable funding mechanisms that support partnerships between public universities and the state, support innovation and economic development and bolster key state sectors. These tools should be recognized as part of Oregon's economic development system, not as isolated university initiatives. Some examples include:

- **University Innovation Research Fund** (UIRF) provides a state match for competitive federal research awards that focus on economic development and/or innovation.

- **University Development Venture Fund,** which seeds capital supporting company formation and early growth.
- **The Oregon Metals Initiative,** which supports Oregon's metals sector by leveraging state dollars and our public research universities to partner with local metals companies to conduct research into metals, metals manufacturing, and metals product design.
- **State Programs**, which consist of line-item appropriations in the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's budget for programs that address economic development, natural resource stewardship, and other issues identified as high priorities for the state. These State Programs facilitate the integration of the universities' multiple missions of instruction, research, and service, and include programs like the Tallwood Design Center (collaboration between OSU and UO), the Fermentation Lab (OSU) and Engineering Technical Sustaining Fund (supporting programs at all seven public universities)

Sector-Based Strategies

OSU is well positioned to support the state's sector-based strategies by serving as a neutral convener and analytical partner, as evidenced by the university's recent efforts leading multi-institution, public-private coalitions such as FAST (NSF Region Innovation Engine) and the CorMic EDA Tech Hub, which accelerates microfluidics-based manufacturing and startups. The university is prepared to help identify priority sectors, align research and workforce pipelines, and convene industry, state agencies, local governments, and communities around shared goals.

The university is committed to help align research, workforce development, and industry needs within priority sectors such as semiconductors, mass timber, food & beverage, AI & robotics, clean tech, healthcare and other emerging clusters, strengthening coordination across regions and institutions.

Evaluation of Emerging Industries and Policy Choices

OSU is prepared to deploy its applied research and analytical capacity to support evaluation of emerging industries and policy decisions. This includes providing evidence-based analysis of opportunities, risks, and tradeoffs associated with new industries or regulatory frameworks, such as clean tech, critical minerals mining or other emerging sectors. Leveraging this expertise can inform strategic investments and reduce implementation risk.

Company Retention Through Predictable Ecosystems and Regulatory Certainty

Company retention is influenced by workforce availability, regulatory clarity, and ecosystem stability. Regulatory certainty is a critical factor in both attraction and retention. OSU is prepared to bring faculty expertise in water resources, land use, public policy and ecosystem development to support the state in designing regulatory frameworks that are rigorous, predictable, and informed by applied research. Leveraging OSU's analytical capacity can support better policy design, faster implementation, and reduced risk for companies making long-term investment decisions in Oregon.

Infrastructure and Place-Based Development

As an anchor institution, OSU is prepared to support infrastructure and real estate development that enables economic growth. This includes innovation districts, research facilities, and industry-adjacent spaces that support company growth, talent attraction, and regional development. Coordination between state, local, and institutional partners can maximize the economic impact of these investments.

Rural Prosperity Through the OSU Statewides

The OSU Statewide Public Service Programs — OSU Extension Service, Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station, and the Oregon Forest Research Laboratory — provide transformational research and education to support Oregon's vital agriculture and forest products industries. The institution's research forests and fourteen agricultural experiment and research station locations ensure Oregon's commodities thrive, supporting our state and local economies.

OSU Extension Service is a statewide asset that advances economic prosperity in rural communities by supporting small businesses, producers, workforce skills, and community capacity. Extension provides a direct pathway for translating research into practice and stands ready to play an expanded role in implementing statewide economic strategies in rural and resource-dependent regions.

OSU Extension programs reach approximately 90,000 youth annually through 4-H, supported by more than 8,000 volunteers and over 600 employees, providing a direct and scalable pathway to implement statewide economic strategies in rural and resource-dependent regions.

Closing

OSU is committed to supporting the successful implementation of the Oregon Economic Development Strategy and stands ready to serve as a strategic partner. Leveraging OSU's capabilities across workforce development, sector strategy, innovation, regulatory analysis, infrastructure, and rural prosperity can strengthen execution and improve long-term outcomes for Oregon. OSU is prepared to work with the state to define clear, measurable commitments aligned with shared goals, including workforce-aligned work-based learning, employer-engaged upskilling, applied industry research and pilots, and startup creation and scale-up support that directly contribute to job creation and private-sector investment across Oregon.

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute and look forward to continued collaboration as the plan advances.

Jan. 30, 2026

Oregon Business & Industry (OBI) recently commissioned a statewide voter survey conducted by DHM Research in advance of the 2026 legislative session.

OBI commissioned this research to better understand what Oregonians see as the state's most urgent challenges, with an emphasis on taxes, regulations, affordability and economic competitiveness. The findings reinforce that voters are concerned about the direction of the state and are looking for solutions that improve economic competitiveness and ease cost pressures.

We are sharing this memo and data to provide policymakers with insights into Oregonians' values and beliefs and to help inform policy discussions during this year's legislative session.

Thank you for your commitment to advancing our shared goal of improving Oregon's economic competitiveness.

Sincerely,

Angela Wilhelms
President & CEO
Oregon Business & Industry
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January 30, 2026

To: Angela Wilhelms and Preston Mann, Oregon Business & Industry
From: John Horvick and Tony Iaccarino, DHM Research
Re: OBI 2026 Legislative Survey Executive Summary

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

This mixed-mode survey, combining phone and text-to-online approaches, engaged 600 registered Oregon voters across the state. The sample size enables comprehensive analysis of voter opinions overall and across demographic subgroups. Statistical weighting by age, gender, race, education level, income, party affiliation, and area ensures that results accurately represent the registered voter population. The margin of error for the full sample is ±4.0%. Due to rounding, some totals may differ by ±1 from the sum of individual responses.

KEY FINDINGS

- **Voters are pessimistic about the direction of the state.** Only 26% say the state is heading in the right direction, with positivity remaining stubbornly low since 2021. Most voters say the problems facing the state are getting worse: 85% saying cost of living and 77% say housing affordability are worsening.
- **Elected leaders get low ratings for job performance.** 64% disapprove of Governor Tina Kotek's job performance, 64% disapprove of the Oregon Legislature's performance, and 55% disapprove of President Donald Trump's performance.
- **Economic outlook is poor and Oregonians are struggling to get by.** 73% rate Oregon's current economic conditions as poor, an increase from 60% in 2021. 68% say conditions are getting worse, an increase from 62% over the same period. Nearly half have difficulties paying for essentials like groceries, healthcare, utility bills, auto insurance, and home mortgage or rent.
- **Voters blame high taxes and excessive regulations for Oregon's sluggish economy.** 52% think Oregon's economic growth rate is slower than the national average, 42% about the same, and 4% faster. Asked to explain the slow growth, 23% mention high taxes and 21% mention excessive regulations. No other reasons are cited as often.
- **Voters favor a pro-growth strategy to tackle upcoming state budget deficits.** 52% prefer reducing regulations and creating incentives to spur economic growth, jobs, and tax revenue. 27% support spending cuts, and 12% favor raising taxes to fully fund programs. Voters favor the first approach, regardless of party affiliation.

VOTER SENTIMENT

Positivity about the direction of the state remains low. Only 26% say the state is heading in the right direction. Positivity has remained low, hovering below 40% since 2021. Partisanship shapes outlook, with only 5% of Republican and 23% of NAV/Other voters saying the state is headed in the right direction, compared to 46% of Democratic voters. Still, even among Democratic voters, fewer than half are positive about the direction of the state.

Asked to articulate in their own words the most important problem facing the state, voters most often mention issues related to government and leadership. While homelessness is mentioned by 21% of voters as the single-biggest problem in the state, the following issues, taken together, are mentioned by 50% of voters: government mismanagement (13%), taxes and tariffs (13%), Democratic leadership (12%), Republican leadership (7%), and budget cuts (5%).

Voters say key problems are getting worse. Most see the following problems as worsening: overall cost of living (85%), housing affordability (77%), homelessness (67%), access to affordable healthcare (65%), quality of K-12 education (61%), availability of quality jobs (54%), and the condition of streets, roads, and highways (53%).

Consider:

- *Slide 1: "Positivity about the direction of the state remains low and has declined since 2025." (showing right direction trends)*
- *Slide 2: "Perceptions about the direction of the state are partisan, with NAV/Other voters and Republicans less optimistic." (showing right direction by party)*
- *Slide 3: "When asked to identify Oregon's most important problem, voters most often point to political issues, followed by social and economic issues." (showing categories of most important problems)*
- *Slide 4: "Taken together, political issues such as government mismanagement, taxes, tariffs, political leadership, and funding are viewed as the state's biggest problems." (showing breakdown of the state's most important problems)*
- *Slide 5: "When it comes to key problems facing Oregon, most say the problems—especially cost of living and housing affordability—have been getting worse in recent years." (showing better, same, or worse on key problems)*

JOB APPROVAL AND UPCOMING ELECTIONS

Voters disapprove of the job performance of their elected leaders. 64% disapprove of Governor Kotek's performance, 64% disapprove of the Oregon Legislature's performance, and 55% disapprove of President Trump's performance. While partisanship shapes perceptions of job performance, Republicans are more approving of their leaders than Democrats: 88% of Republicans approve of President Trump's performance while 63% of Democrats approve of Governor Kotek's performance.

If state legislative elections were today, voters are divided on who they would vote for in their districts. 45% would vote for the Republican Party candidate and 42% would vote for the Democratic Party candidate. Here too, there is stronger support among Republicans (92%) for their own party candidates than among Democrats for their own (75%), with NAV/Other voters leaning Republican (42%).

Consider:

- *Slide 6: "Voters disapprove of the job performance of Governor Kotek, the Oregon Legislature, and President Trump." (showing job performance ratings)*
- *Slide 7: "Democratic approval of Governor Kotek is softer than Republican approval of President Trump." (showing approval ratings by party)*
- *Slide 8: "If the election were today, voters are divided on who they would vote for in their district." (showing overall preference for legislative candidates)*

- *Slide 9: "Democratic support for Democratic candidates is softer than Republican support for Republican candidates." (showing preference by party)*

ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

Voters are pessimistic about Oregon's economy and are struggling to make ends meet. 73% rate Oregon's economic conditions as poor, an increase from 60% in 2021. Only 20% rate the economy as good. These ratings are shared across region and income levels, with a minimum of 70% of voters in the Portland metro area, Willamette Valley, and the rest of the state rating conditions as poor; along with a minimum of 69% across all income groups. Partisan ratings are more mixed, with 89% of Republicans, 74% of NAV/Other voters, and 58% of Democrats rating the state's economy as poor.

68% of voters say economic conditions in Oregon are getting worse, an increase from 62% in 2021. 27% say economic conditions are staying the same. Only 2% say they are getting better. Voters are more likely to blame Governor Kotek than either President Trump or the Oregon Legislature for the state's worsening economic conditions. Among those who say economic conditions are getting worse, 43% blame Governor Kotek, while 29% blame President Trump, and 22% blame state legislators. Democrats are more likely to blame Governor Kotek than Republicans are to blame Trump: 14% of Democrats blame Governor Kotek, while only 2% of Republicans hold President Trump responsible.

Roughly half the state's voters say it's difficult to pay for basic expenses. 51% find it difficult to pay for groceries, 46% for healthcare, 46% for home energy bills, 44% for auto insurance, and 43% for home mortgage or rent. Lower-income and middle-income voters have the greatest difficulty paying for basic expenses, with a minimum of 50% across both income levels reporting difficulties. For voters in low-income households earning less than $50,000, 70% say it's difficult to pay for groceries.

Consider:

- *Slide 10: "Most voters currently rate economic conditions in Oregon as poor. The negative outlook has increased since 2021." (showing OBI survey ratings over time)*
- *Slide 11: "Most groups rate Oregon's economic conditions as poor. Partisanship shapes perceptions of the economy." (showing 2026 ratings by area, party, and income)*
- *Slide 12: "Most voters say economic conditions in Oregon are getting worse." (showing OBI survey outlook over time)*
- *Slide 13: "Voters are more likely to back Governor Kotek for Oregon's worsening economic conditions." (showing who to blame)*
- *Slide 14: "More Democrats blame Governor Kotek than Republicans blame Trump, with NAV/Other voters more likely to blame Governor Kotek." (showing blame by party)*
- *Slide 15: "About half of voters have difficulties paying basic expenses." (showing difficulty in various areas)*
- *Slide 16: "Middle-income and lower-income voters have the most difficulty paying basic expenses." (showing difficulty by income level)*

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Voters say the state's economic growth rate is slower than the national average and blame high taxes and excessive regulations. 52% say the growth rate is slower than the national average, 42% say it's about the same, and 4% say it's faster. Asked to explain in their own words why growth has been slower, 44% of voters mention either high taxes (23%) or excessive regulations (21%). No other reasons are mentioned as often.

Consider:

- *Slide 17: "Most voters believe Oregon's economic growth rate is slower than the national average. They prefer it to be faster." (showing assessment of growth rate v. preference for growth rate)*
- *Slide 18: "More than 4 in 10 voters point to high taxes and excessive regulations as the main reasons for the state's slow economic growth. Nearly 1 in 5 blame Democratic leaders." (showing open-ended explanations)*

TAXES AND REGULATIONS

Voters think businesses in Oregon are over-taxed and over-regulated. 56% of voters think taxes on businesses in Oregon are too high. 16% say they are about right. Only 9% think they are too low. Republicans (87%) are more likely than Democrats (28%) to think business taxes are too high, with NAV/Other voters (58%) more likely to agree with Republicans.

When it comes to issues like the environment, health, and workplace, 46% of voters think businesses are over-regulated, compared to 27% who think businesses are regulated about right, and only 15% who think they are under-regulated. Republicans (76%) and NAV/Other voters (49%) are more likely than Democrats (21%) to share the view that businesses are over-regulated.

93% of voters believe businesses simply pass along tax and regulatory costs to consumers in the form of higher prices. 76% believe Oregon should pause any new regulations until businesses have time to meet new requirements and to learn whether they are working—a belief that has remained consistent since 2021.

Consider:

- *Slide 19: "Voters think business taxes in Oregon are too high. Views are partisan, with a majority of NAV/Other voters agreeing with Republicans that taxes are too high." (showing overall view and partisan view)*
- *Slide 20: "A plurality of voters think businesses are over-regulated on issues related to the environment, health, and workplace. Here too a similar pattern is evident." (showing overall view and partisan view)*
- *Slide 21: "Nearly all voters believe businesses pass the cost of taxes and regulations onto consumers." (showing this belief)*
- *Slide 22: "Voter preference for pausing new regulations until they are proven effective has remained consistent since 2021." (showing preference over time)*

A PATH FORWARD

Voters prefer a pro-growth strategy to address pending state budget deficits. When provided with a set of options to address Oregon's budget deficit, 52% prefer reducing regulations and creating incentives for economic growth to increase tax revenue through more jobs and higher wages. 27% prefer reducing spending to match available revenue. 12% prefer raising taxes to ensure programs and services remain fully funded.

Regardless of party affiliation, voters prefer a pro-growth strategy to address deficits. 56% of NAV/Other voters, 53% of Republicans, and 46% of Democrats think this approach should be the priority for state lawmakers.

Democrats are the least likely to embrace this approach, but they prefer it to other approaches: reducing spending (23%), and raising taxes (17%).

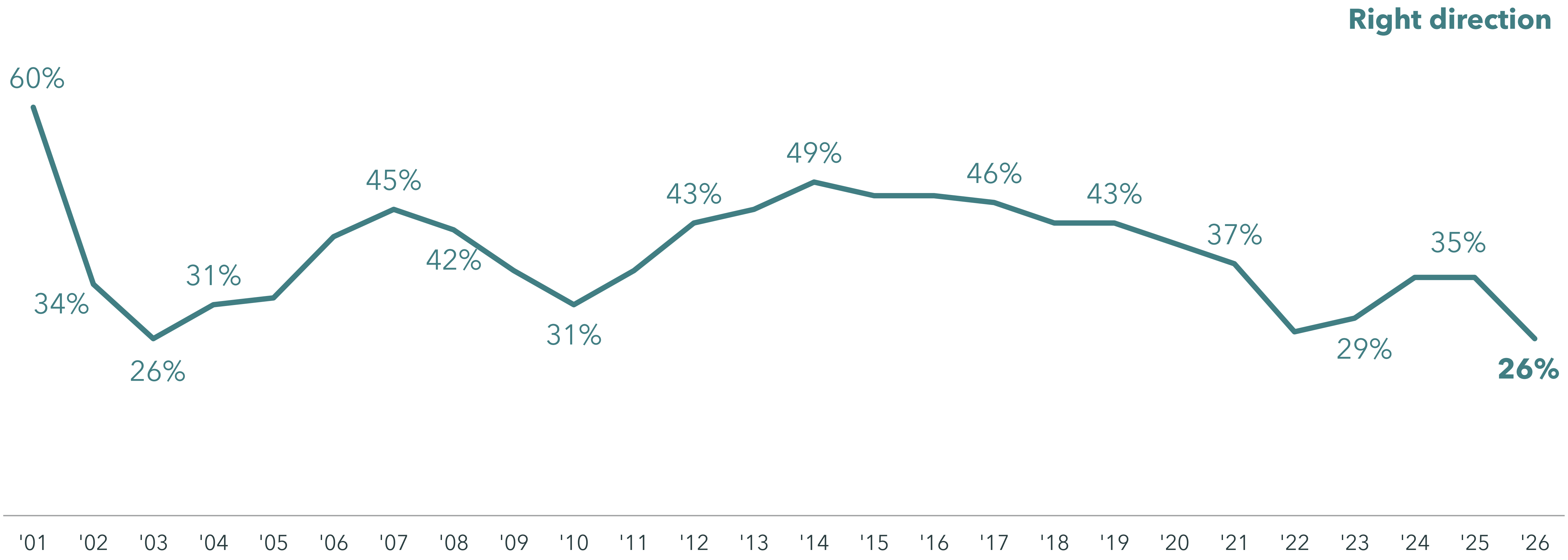
Consider:

- *Slide 23: "To address deficits, voters prefer a third option when provided: reduce regulations and create incentives to drive higher growth, jobs, wages, and tax revenue." (showing preference and also preference by party)*

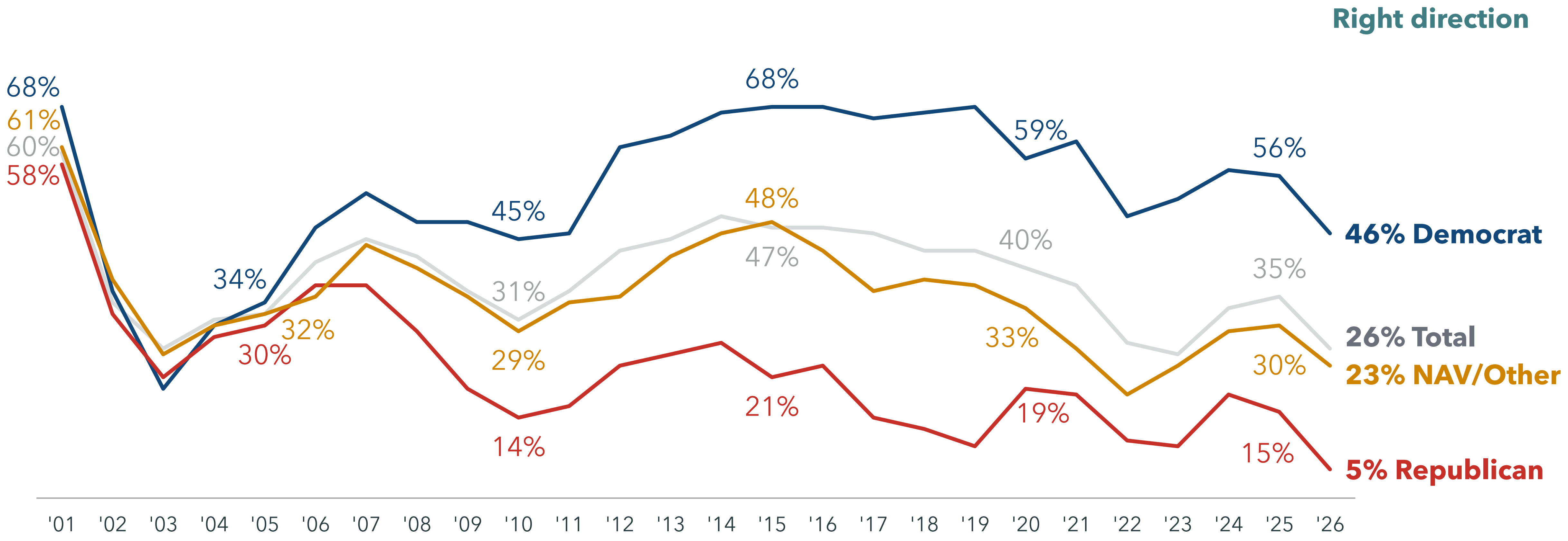
About DHM Research
DHM Research is a nonpartisan research firm that specializes in measuring the values and priorities that drive public opinion. Our research provides high-quality, objective information to help organizations and leaders make informed decisions about complex issues. We have decades of experience in polling, public policy research, and how it can help shape communities. DHM is proud to be recognized as a B Corp-certified company that meets rigorous standards of social and environmental performance, accountability, and transparency.

About Oregon Business & Industry
Oregon Business & Industry (OBI) is a leading business organization. As the statewide chamber of commerce, OBI's mission is to advocate for policies that create a healthy, prosperous and competitive Oregon for generations to come. OBI is also Oregon's affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Retail Federation. Its member companies, 75% of which are small businesses, employ more than 250,000 Oregonians in a variety of industries and across all of Oregon's 36 counties. Learn more at www.oregonbusinessindustry.com.

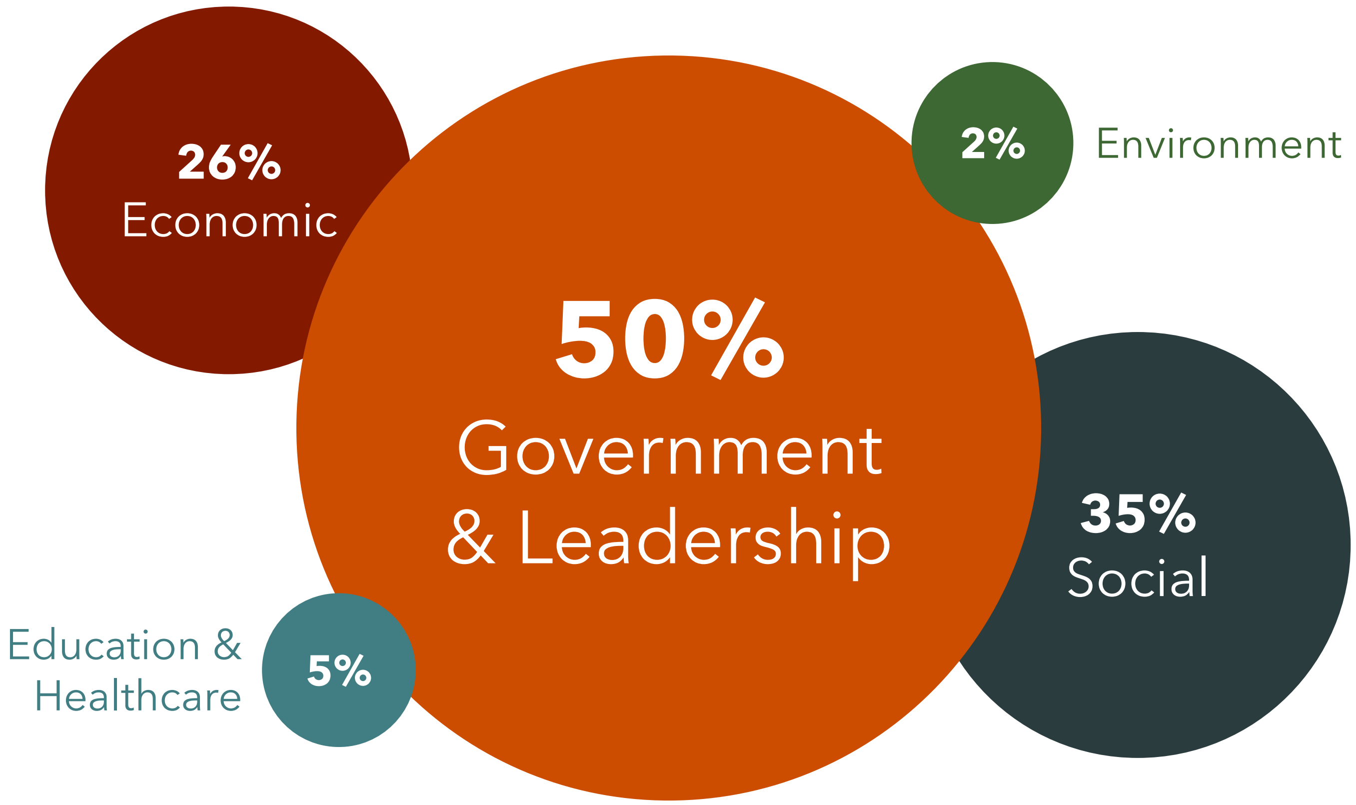
Positivity about the direction of the state remains low and has declined since 2025.



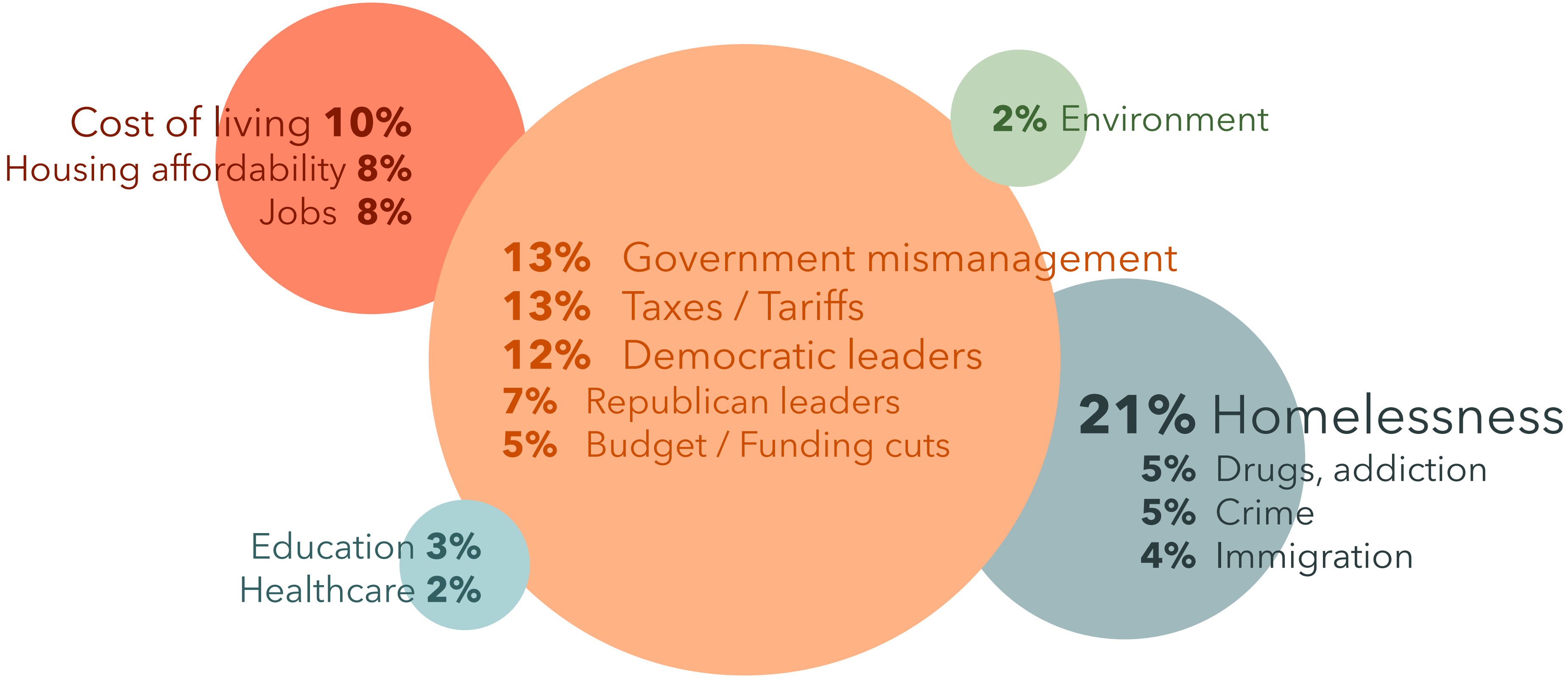
Perceptions about the direction of the state are partisan, with NAV/Other and Republican voters less optimistic.



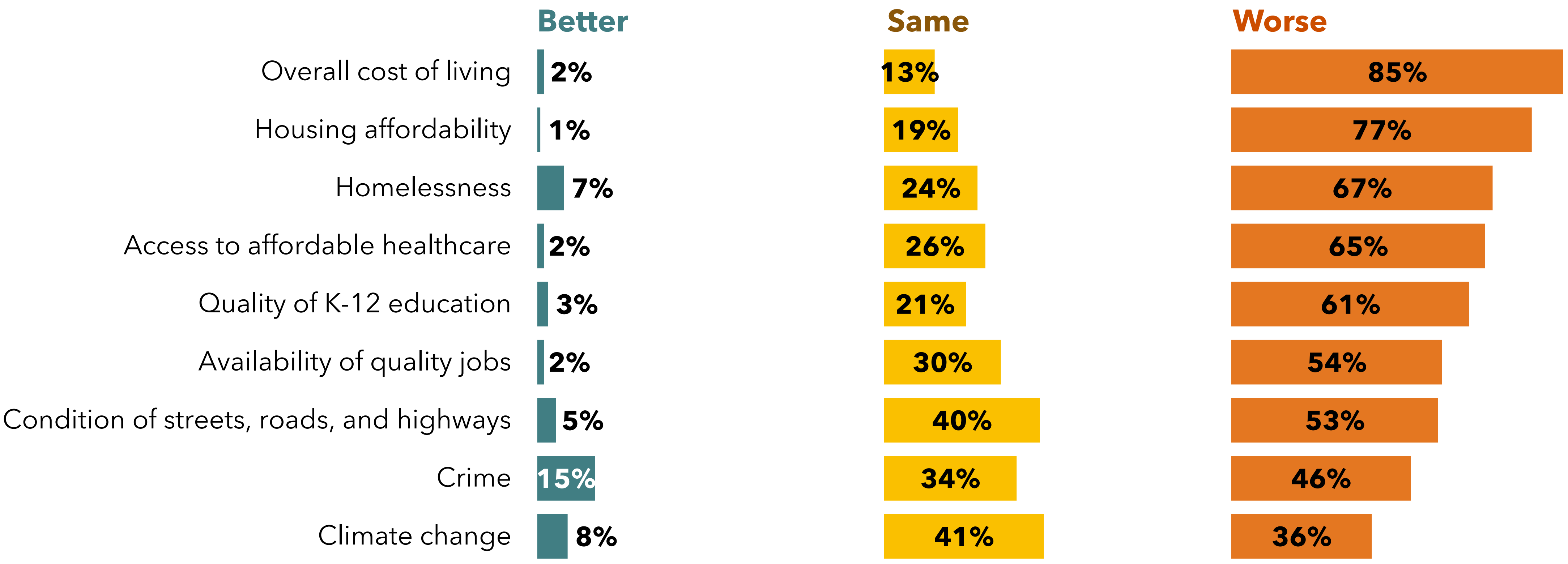
When asked to identify Oregon's most important problem, voters most often point to political issues, followed by social and economic issues.



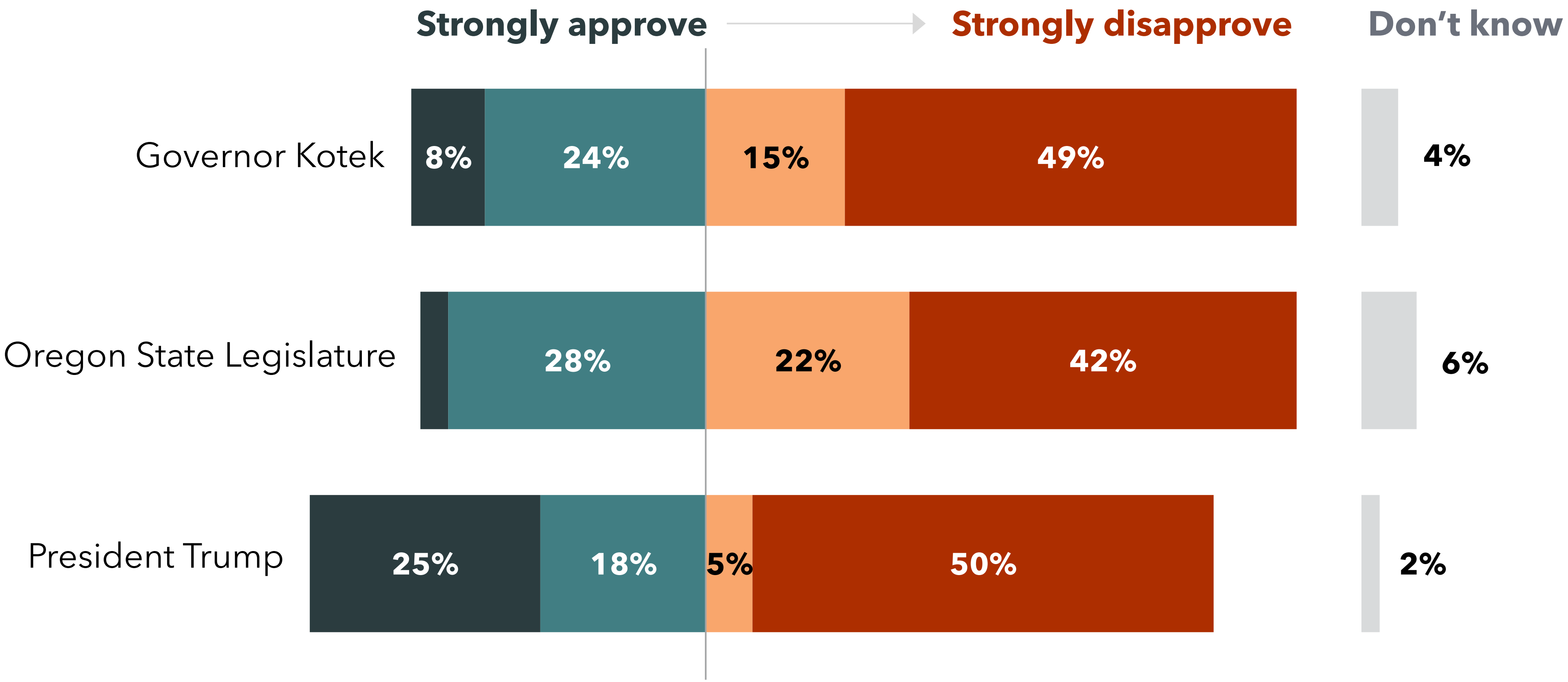
Taken together, political issues such as government mismanagement, taxes, tariffs, political leadership, and funding are viewed as the state's biggest problems.



When it comes to key problems facing Oregon, most voters say the problems—especially cost of living and housing affordability—have been getting worse in recent years.

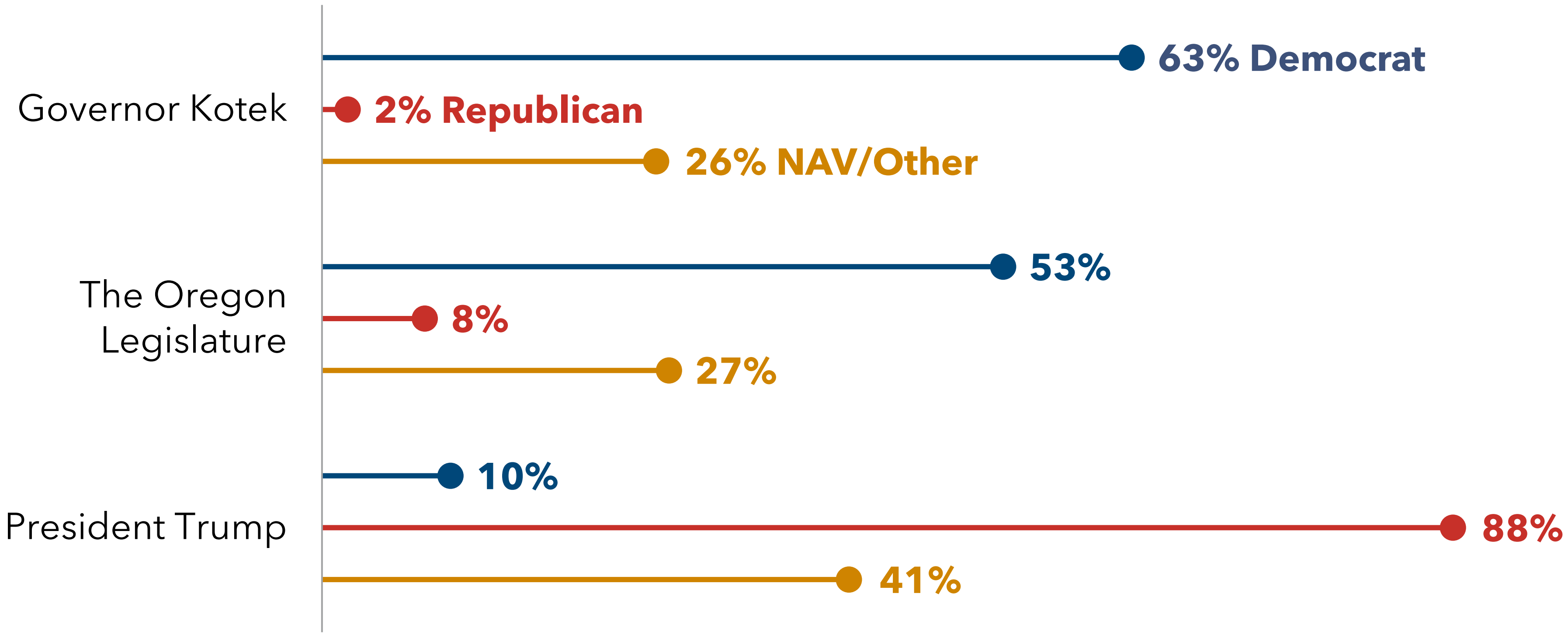


Voters disapprove of the job performance of Governor Kotek, the Oregon Legislature, and President Trump.



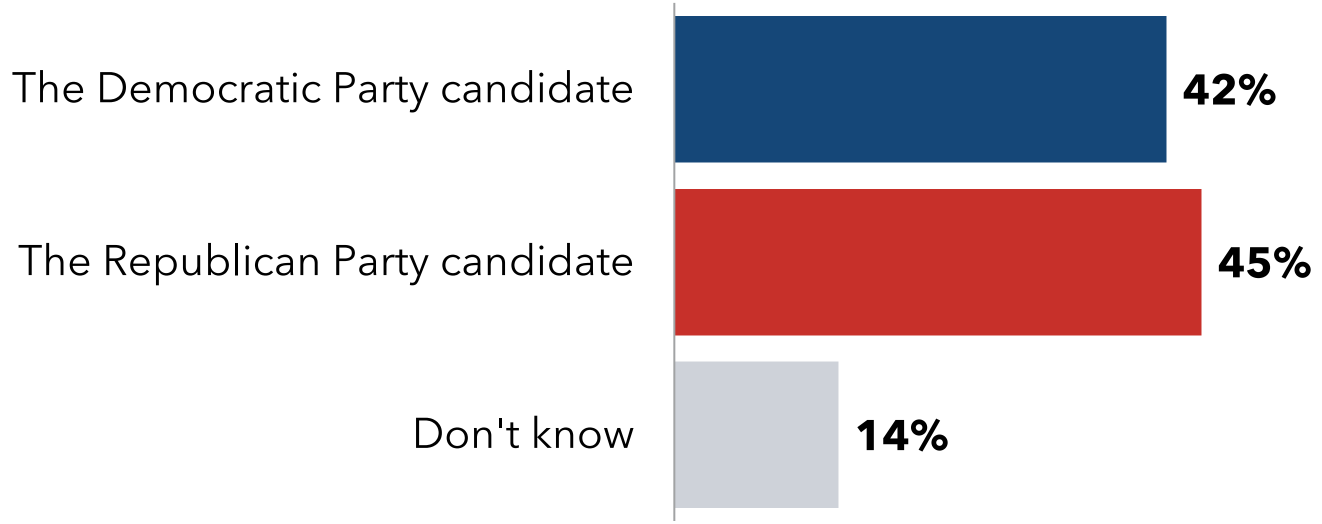
Democratic approval of Governor Kotek is softer than Republican approval of President Trump.

Approval of the job performance of the following people and groups

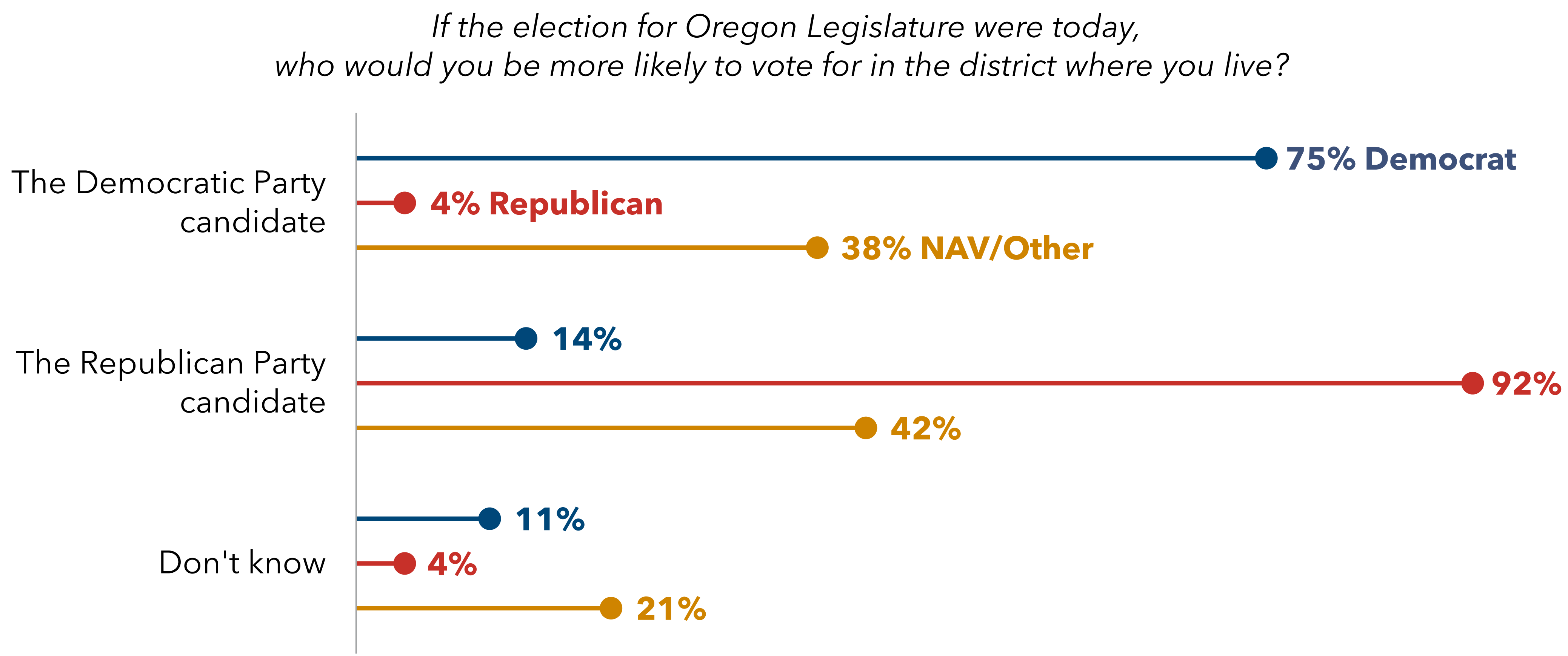


If the election for Oregon Legislature were today, voters are divided on who they would vote for in their district.

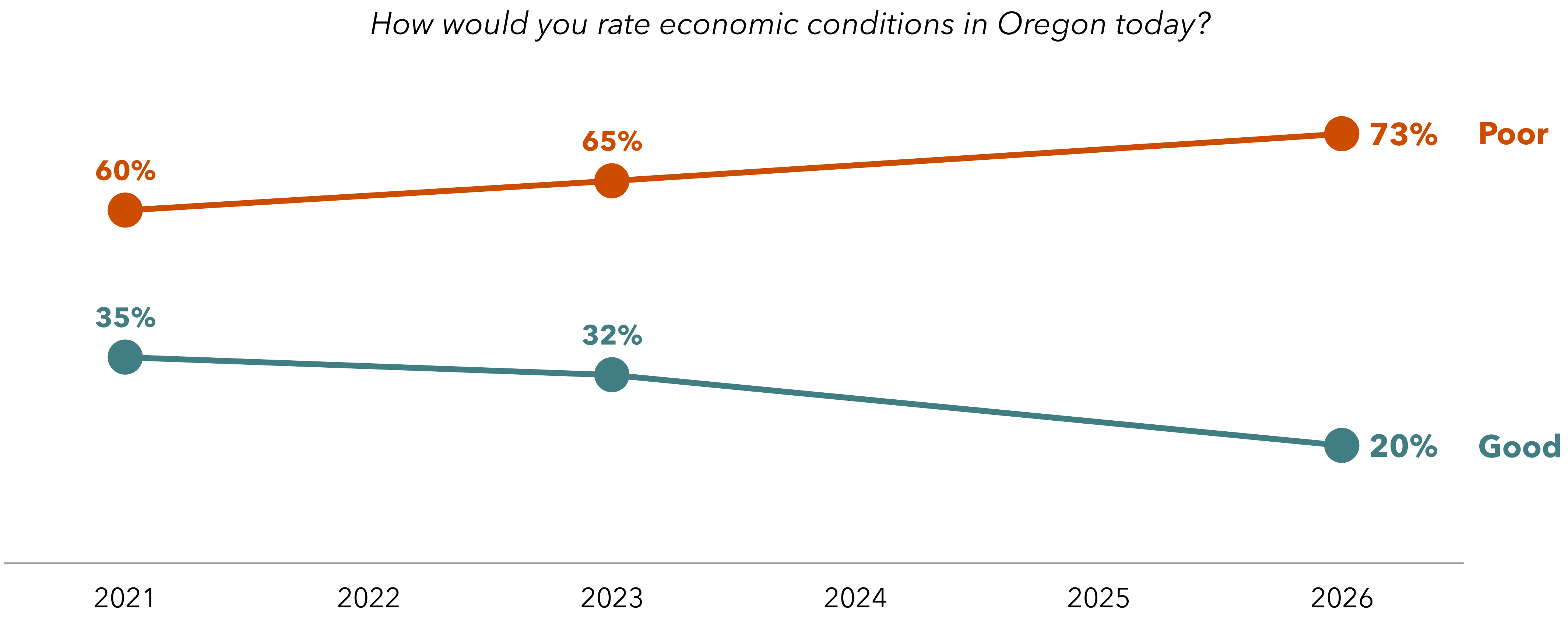
If the election for Oregon Legislature were today,
who would you be more likely to vote for in the district where you live?



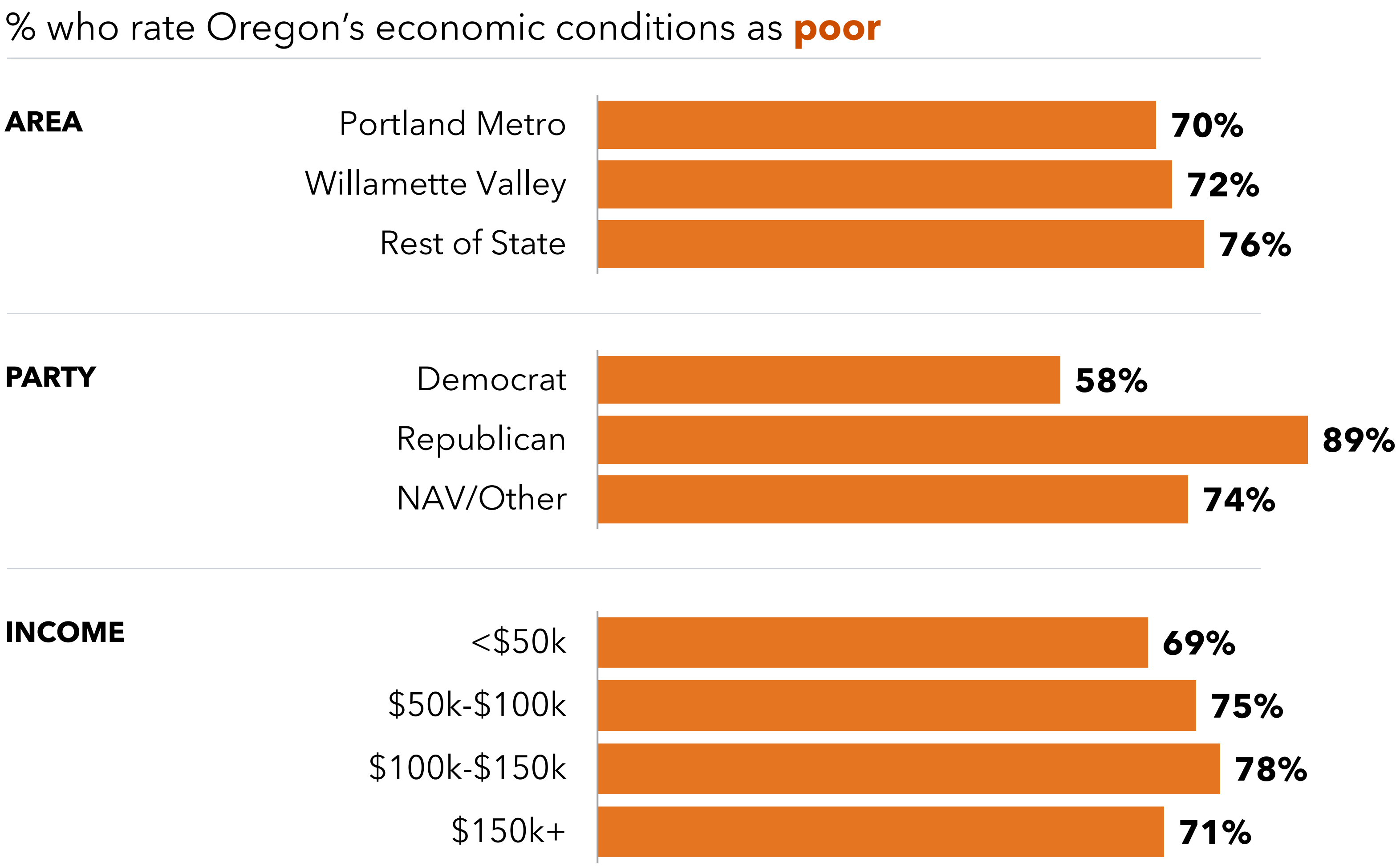
Democratic support for Democratic candidates is softer than Republican support for Republican candidates. NAV/Other voters lean Republican.



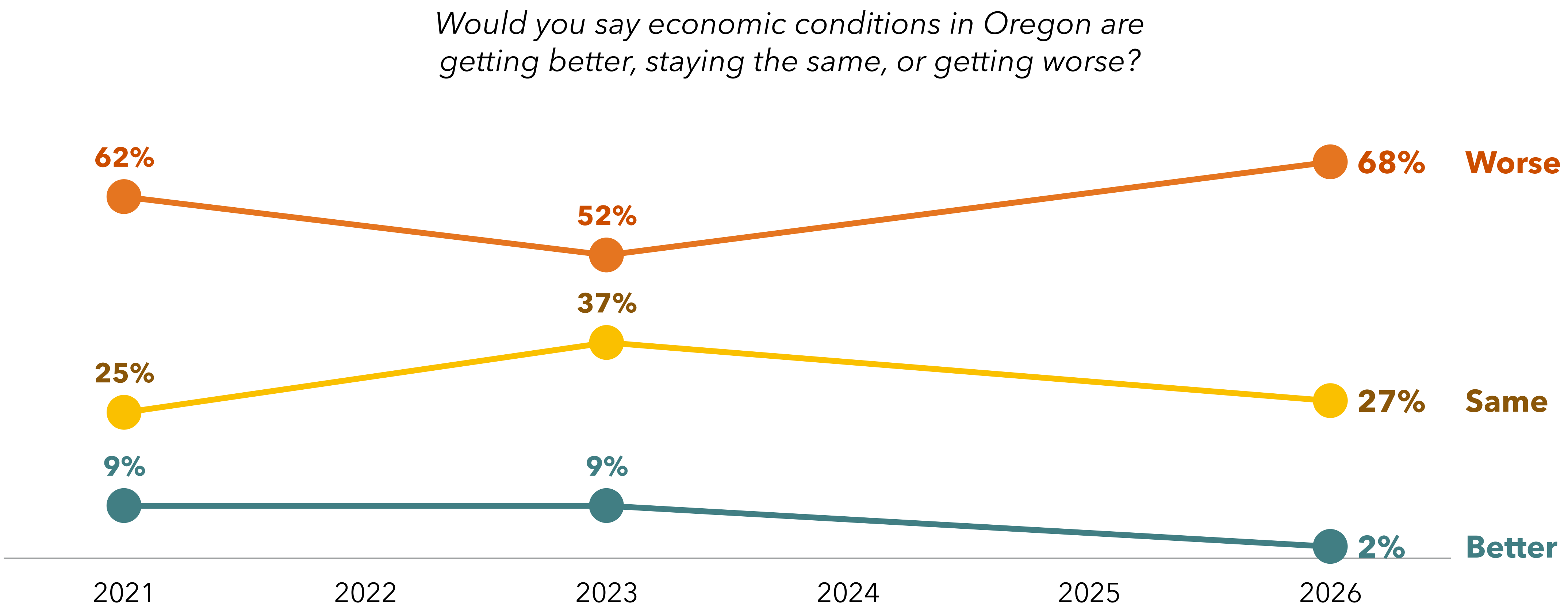
Most voters currently rate economic conditions in Oregon as poor. The negative outlook has increased since 2021.



Most groups rate Oregon's economic conditions as poor. Partisanship shapes perceptions of the economy.

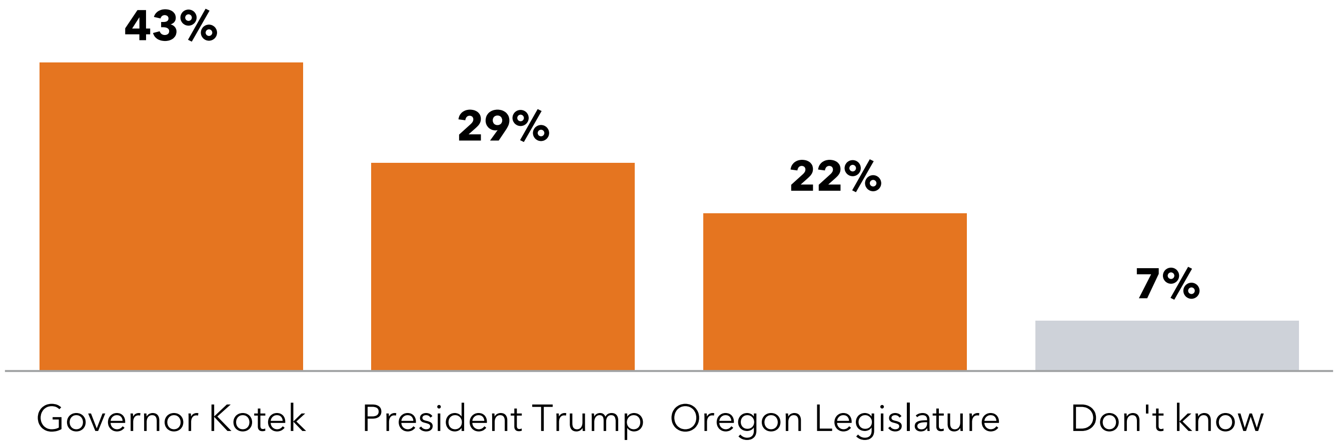


Most voters say economic conditions in Oregon are getting worse.



Voters are more likely to blame Governor Kotek for Oregon’s worsening economic conditions.

Who do you think is most responsible for Oregon’s economic conditions getting worse?

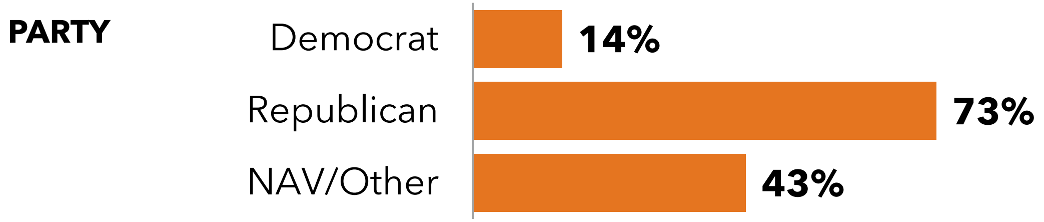


n=408

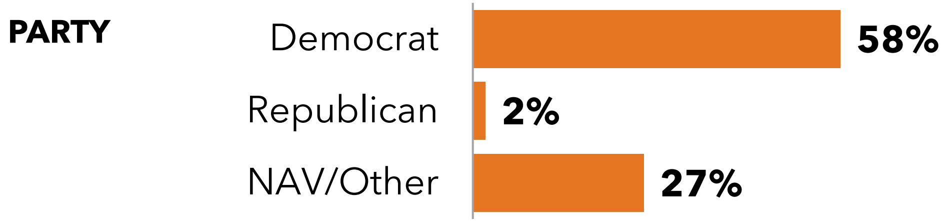
More Democrats blame Governor Kotek than Republicans blame President Trump, with NAV/Other voters more likely to blame Governor Kotek.

Who do you think is most responsible for Oregon's economic conditions getting worse?

% **Blame** Governor Kotek



% **Blame** President Trump



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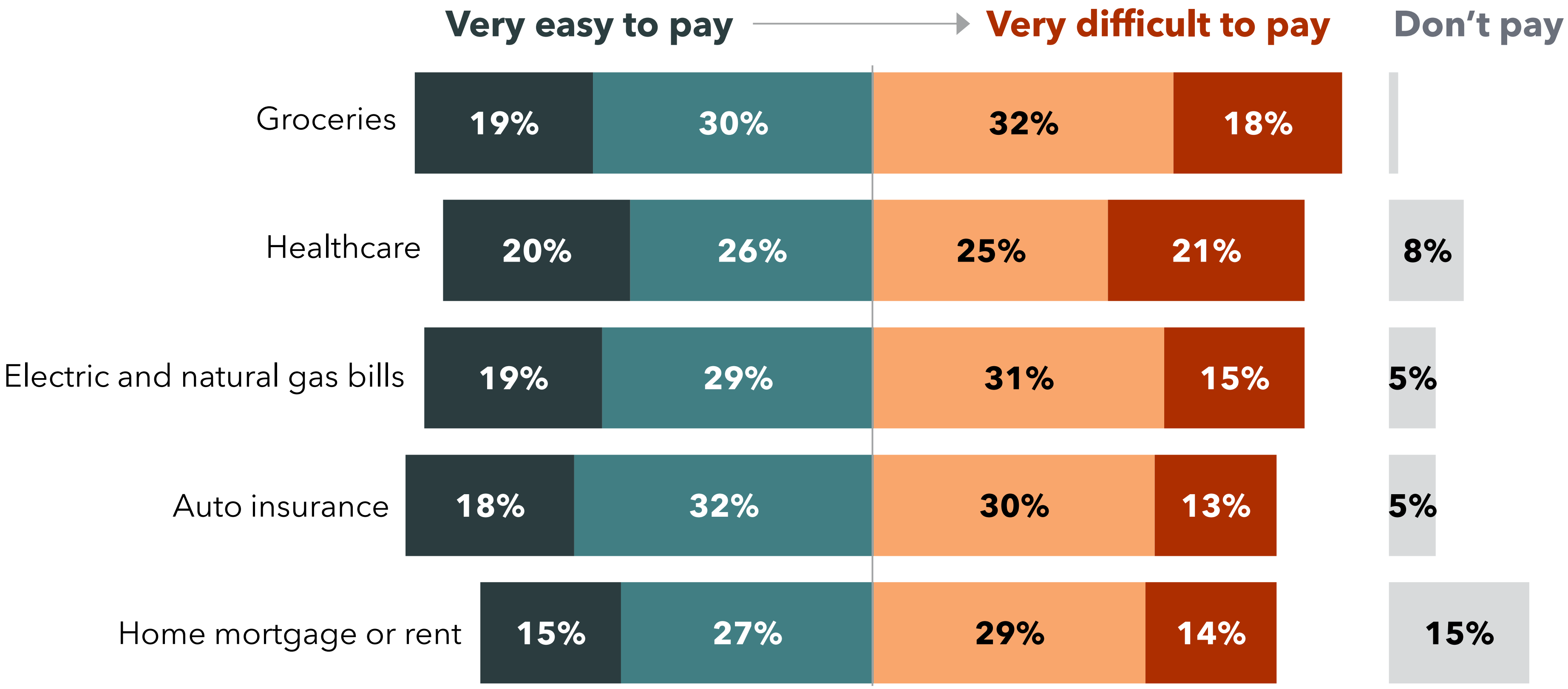
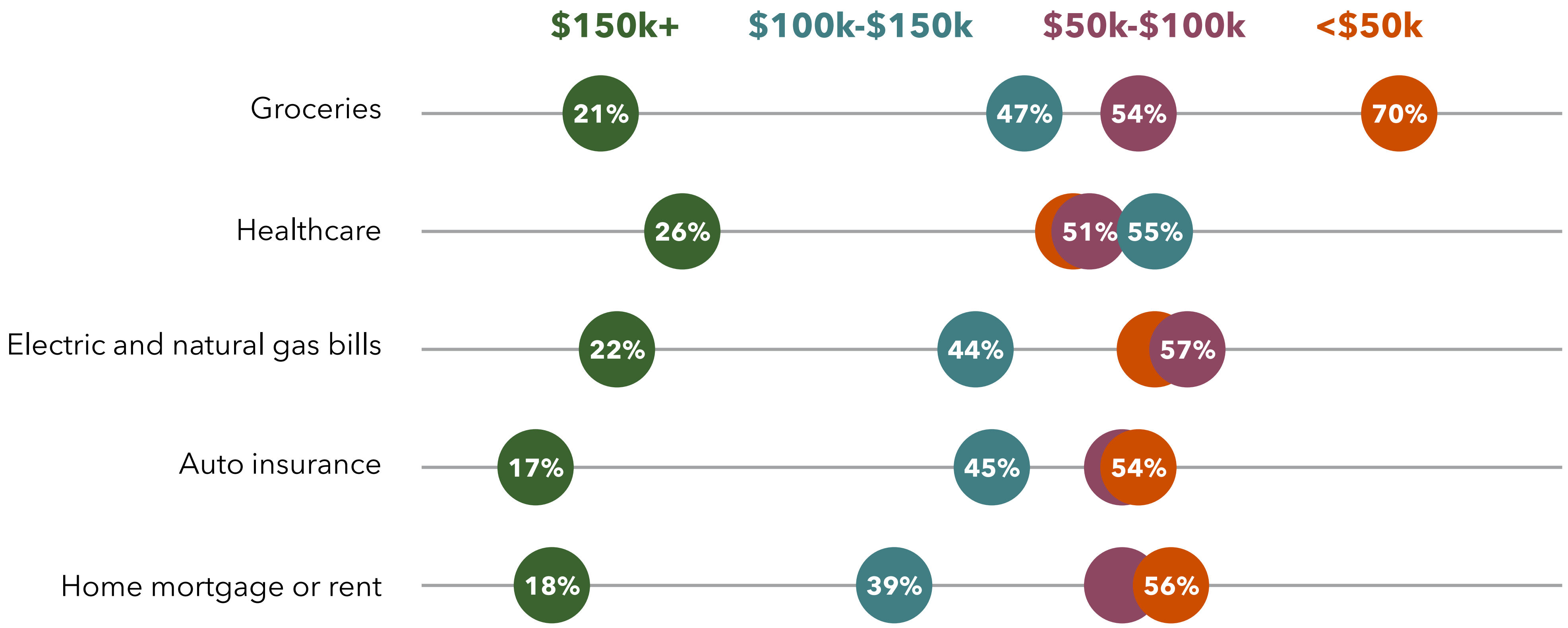
About half of voters have difficulties paying basic expenses.



Middle-income and lower-income voters have the most difficulty paying basic expenses.

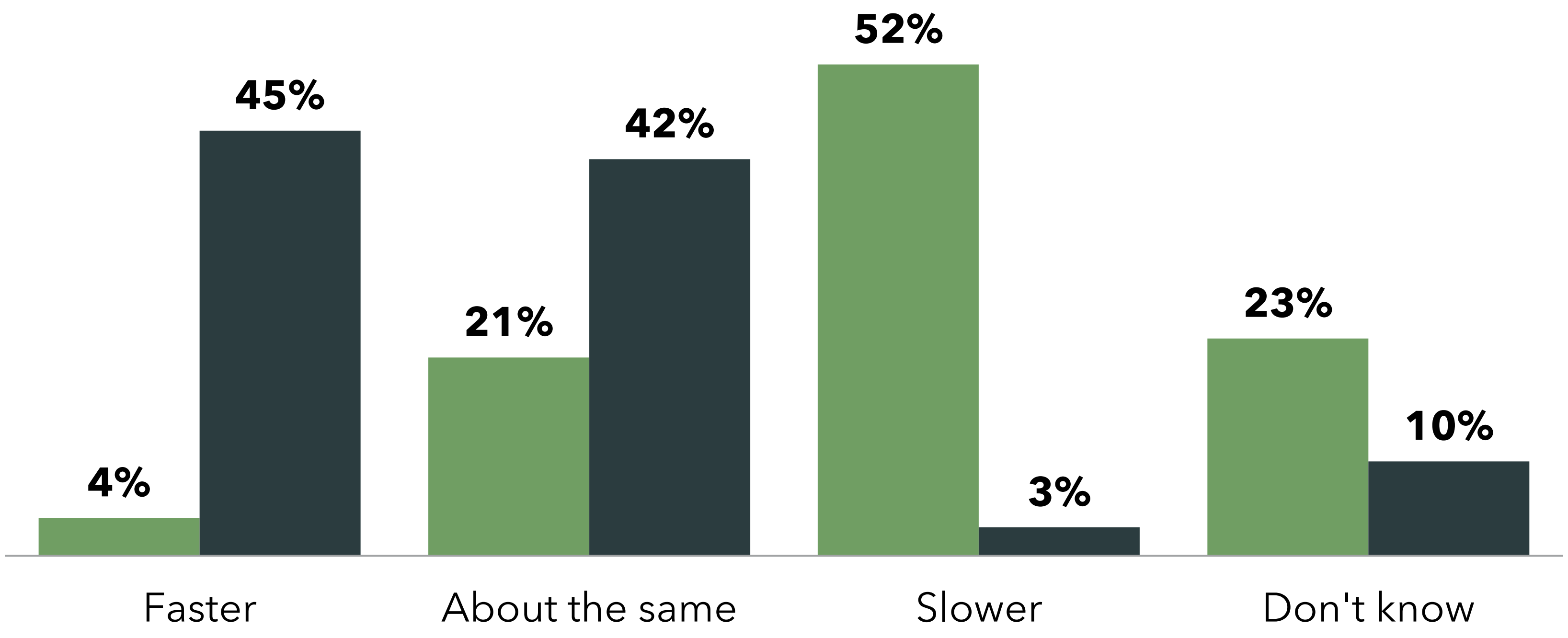
% Find it **difficult** to pay for the following expenses



Most voters believe Oregon's economic growth rate is slower than the national average. They prefer it to be faster than the national average.

Has Oregon's economic growth rate been faster, about the same, or slower than the national average?

Assessment vs **Preference**



More than 4 in 10 voters point to high taxes and excessive regulations as the main reasons for the state's slow economic growth. Nearly 1 in 5 blame Democratic leaders.

Government

23%	High taxes
21%	Excessive regulations
18%	Democratic leaders
9%	Government mismanagement
5%	Republican leaders

Economy

10%	High cost of living
8%	Lack of jobs
5%	Flight from state
5%	Housing affordability
3%	Corporate greed

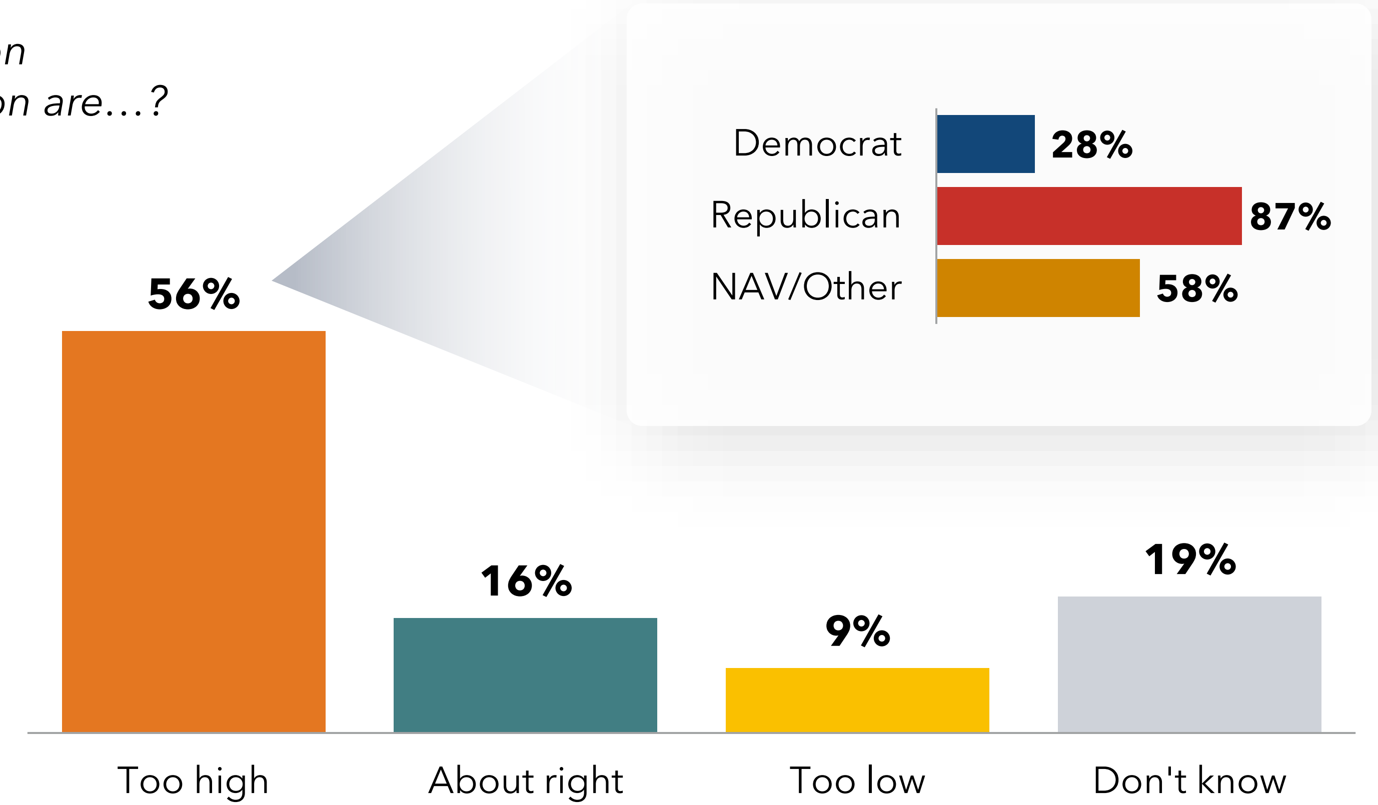
Society

4%	Homelessness
3%	Crime
2%	Social services

Total exceeds 100% because some voters mention more than one reason

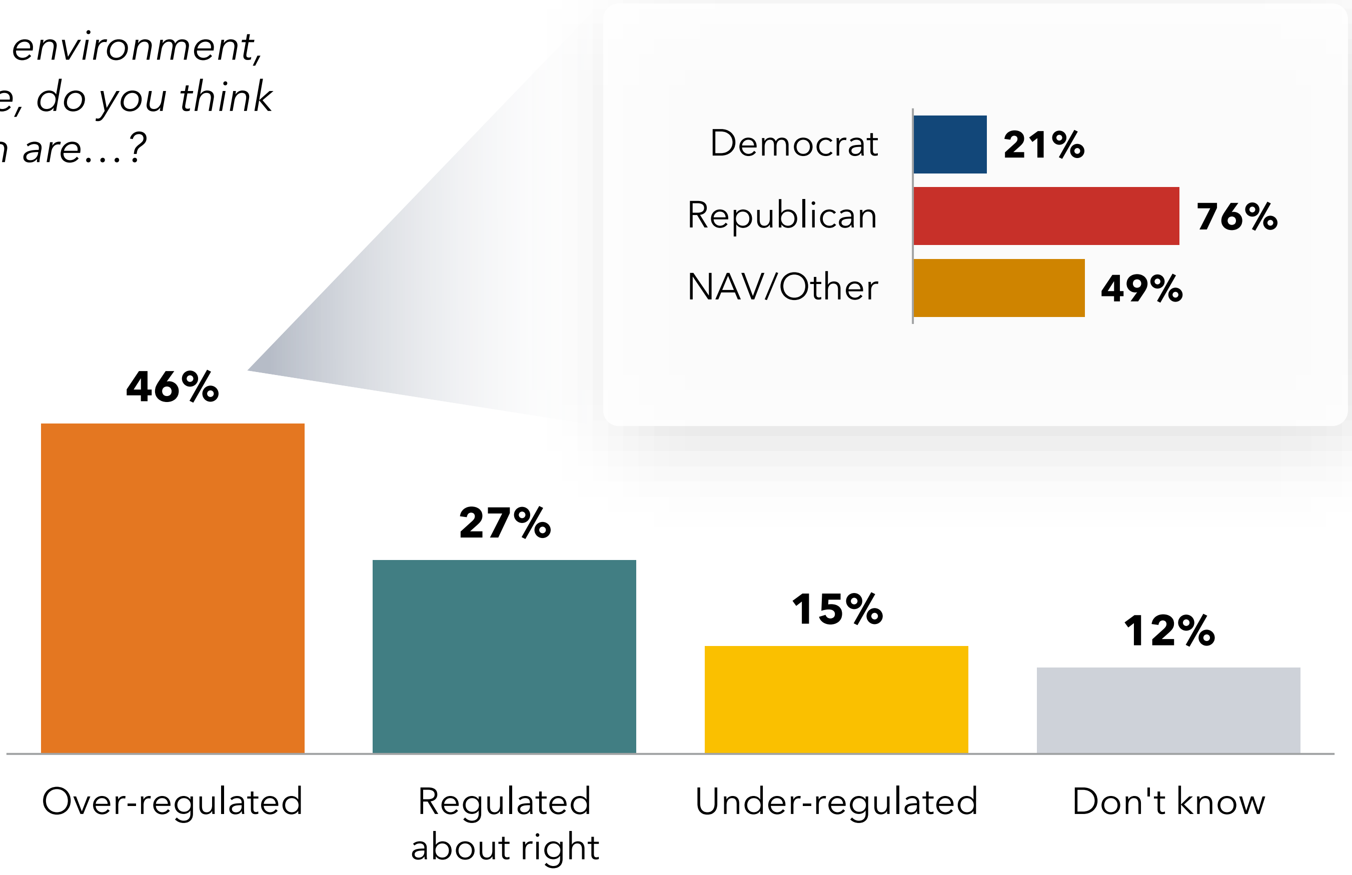
Voters think business taxes in Oregon are too high. Views are partisan, with a majority of NAV/Other voters agreeing with Republicans that taxes are too high.

Do you think taxes on businesses in Oregon are…?



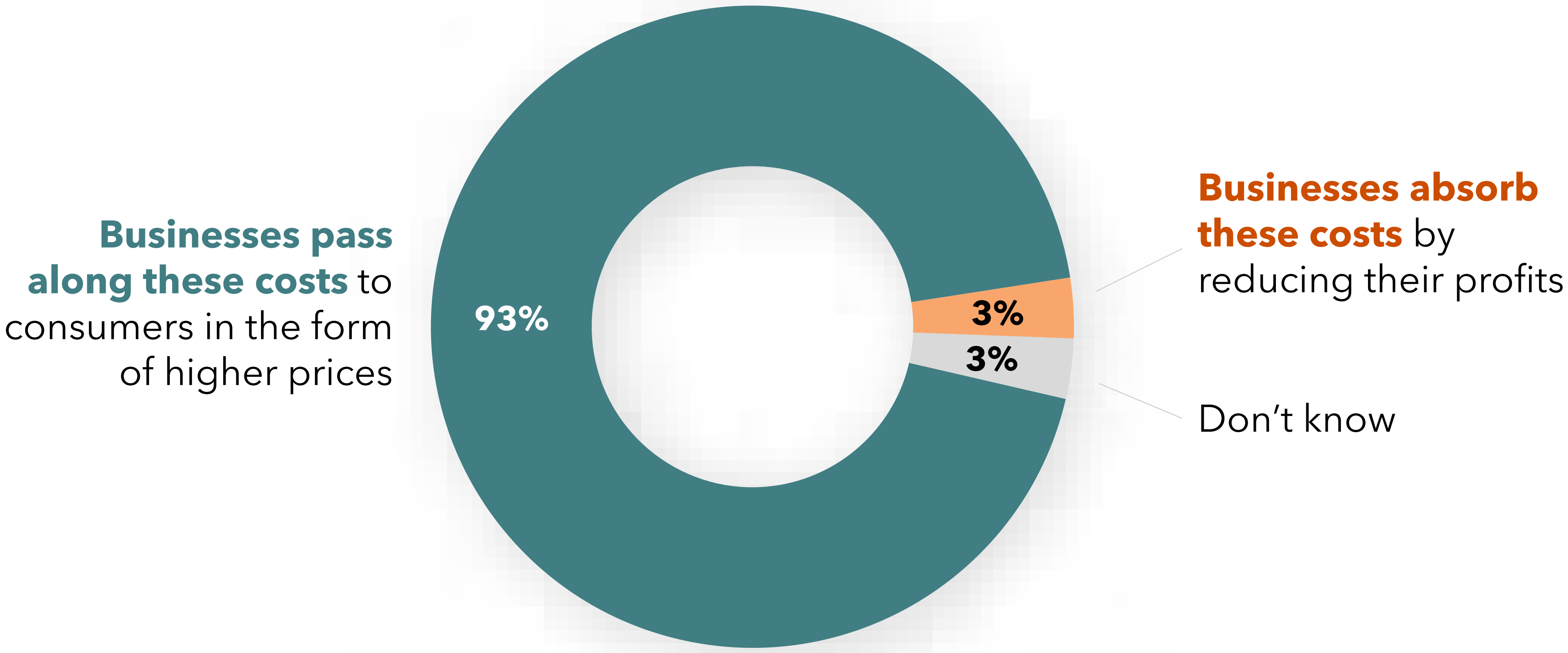
A plurality of voters think businesses are over-regulated on issues relating to the environment, health, and workplace. Here too, a similar partisan pattern is evident.

When it comes to the environment, health, and workplace, do you think businesses in Oregon are…?

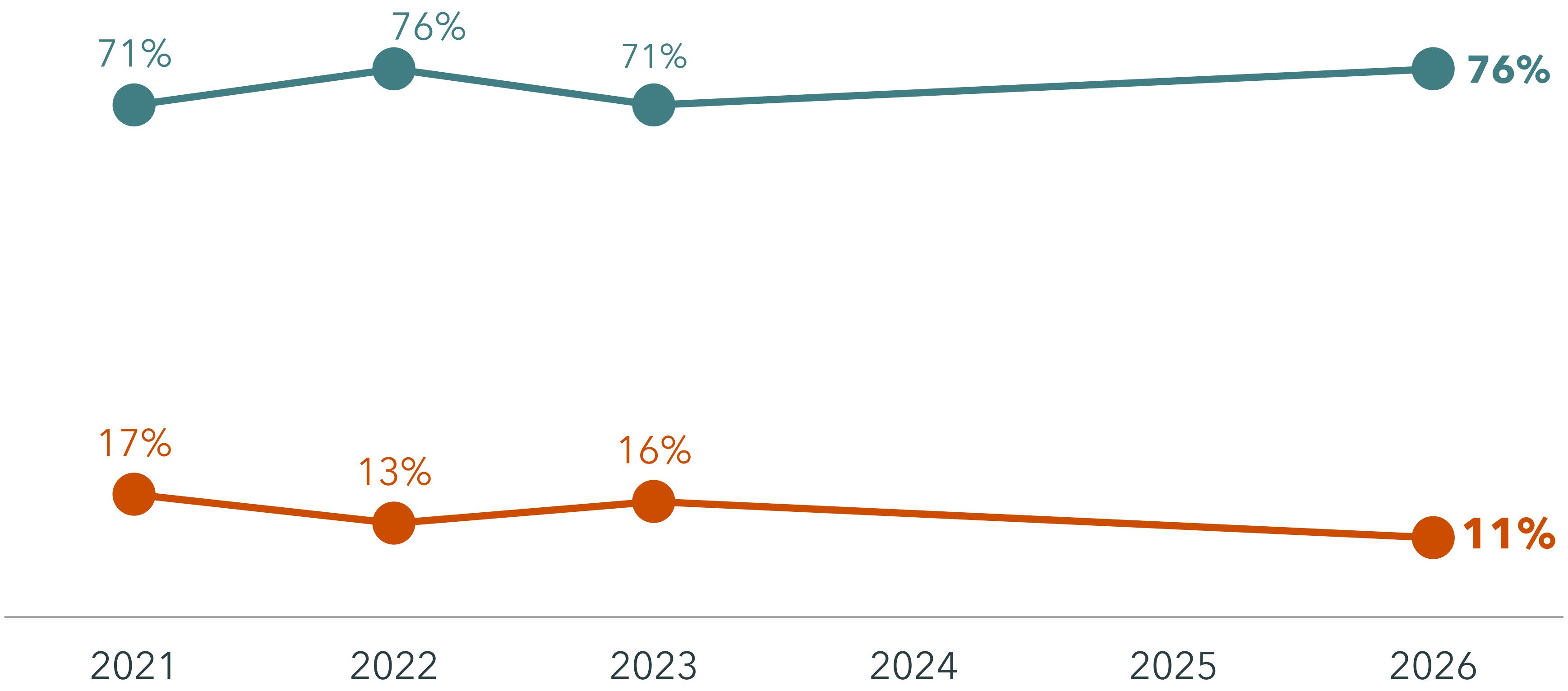


Nearly all voters believe businesses pass the cost of taxes and regulations onto consumers.

Which is more likely when state government enacts new taxes and regulations on businesses?



Voter preference for pausing new regulations until they are proven effective has remained consistent since 2021.

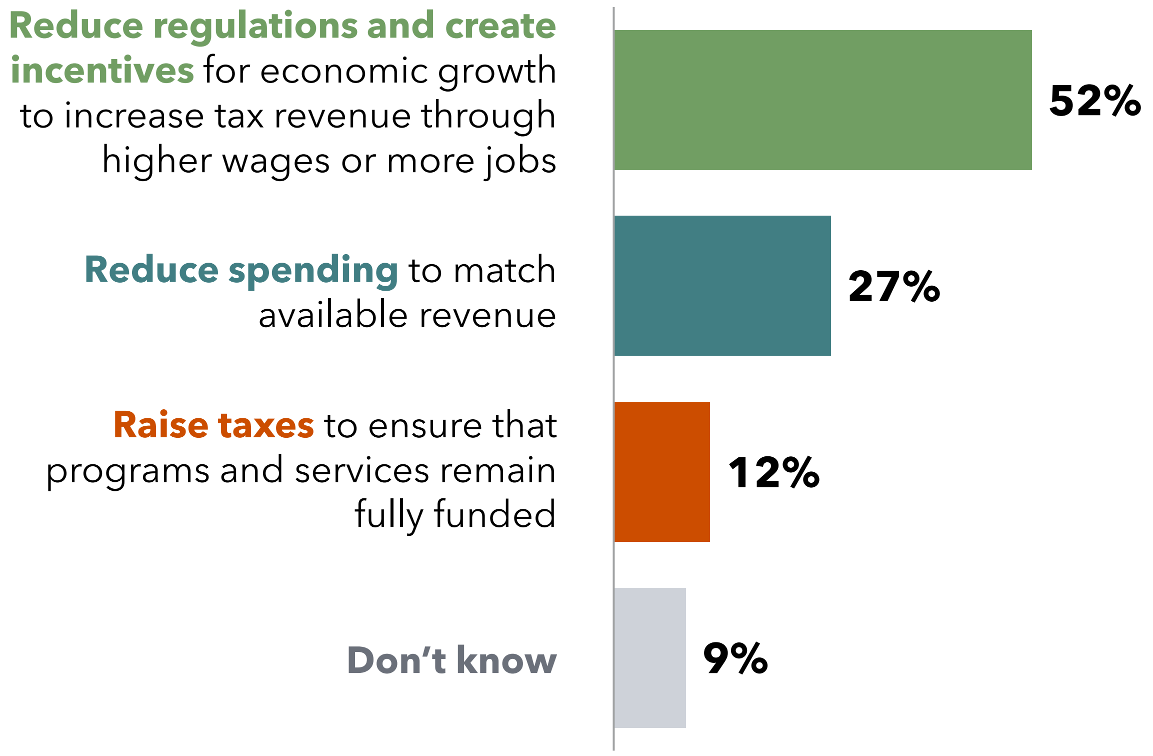


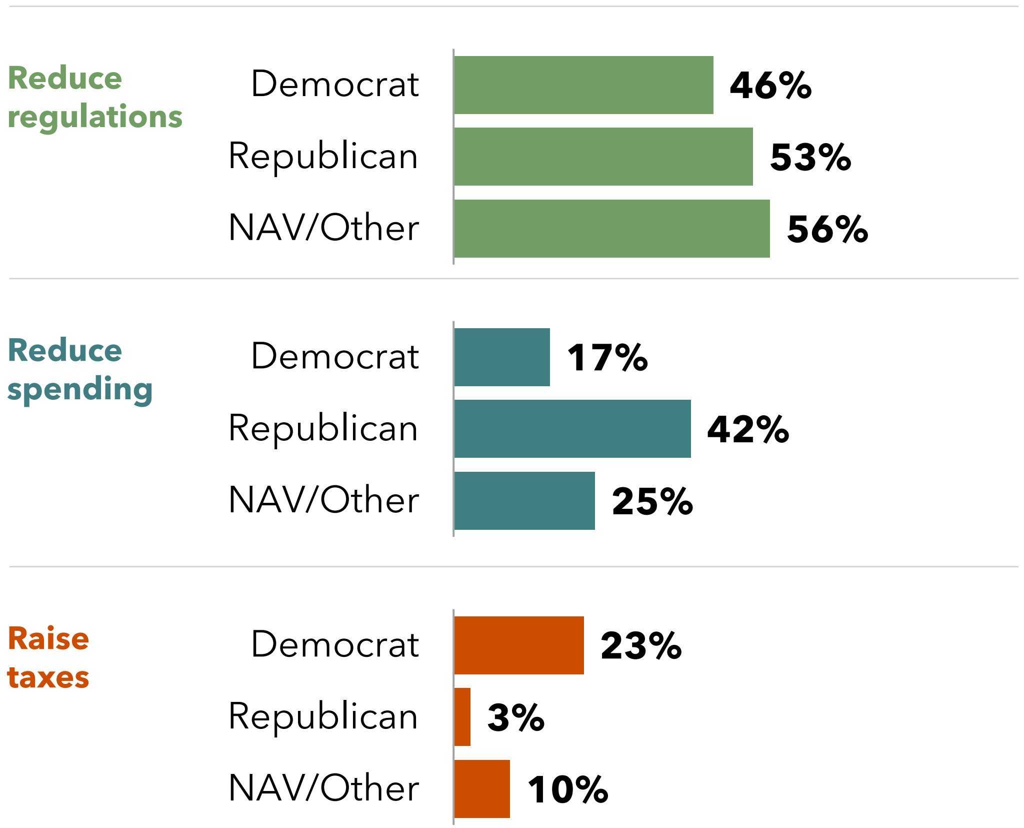
Pause new regulations until businesses have time to meet these requirements and we learn if they are working

Business regulations in Oregon are still too lax, and the state should act quickly to put additional controls in place

To address deficits, voters prefer a third option when provided: reduce regulations and create incentives to drive higher growth, jobs, wages, and tax revenue.

*Which of these **three options** do you think should be the priority for state lawmakers?*





FRAMEWORK FOR ENSURING FINANCIALLY HEALTHY UTILITIES AND CERTAINTY FOR CUSTOMERS RELATING TO INVESTMENT IN ELECTRIC ENERGY INFRASTRUCTURE IN OREGON

A framework is needed to facilitate strategic planning, development, construction and investment in electric energy infrastructure in Oregon to grow our economy, meet state energy goals, mitigate impacts of extreme weather, address reliability and achieve improved rate certainty for customers to address affordability. Progress toward development of this framework can be made with an appropriately scoped Commission-led study.

Foundational Principles

The following principles serve as the foundation of the study:

- Oregon's regulated utility model plays a critical role in supporting fairly-priced energy, reliability and resiliency, sustainability, utility responsiveness and enabling economic growth.
- Oregon has taken important steps to set out policies to ensure improved certainty for customers, including multi-year rate plans and protection against cost causers.
- Sound energy policy, clear regulatory guidance, transparency, regulatory stability and regulatory efficiency are necessary to secure long-term energy investment.
- Wildfire affects everyone and Oregon needs solutions that emphasize community protection, wildfire prevention, responsible investment and rapid recovery.
- Healthy utilities are crucial to economic prosperity, growth and a competitive business environment.
- Oregon is focused on clean generation development, innovation and resource diversity to achieve a clean energy future.
- Transmission development is essential for delivering energy and meeting the shared objective of powering Oregon's economic growth.
- The modern era of demand growth requires new tools and mechanisms to meet load requirements in a timely and efficient manner, while protecting existing customers.
- We can bolster innovation, research and environmental stewardship by investing in new technologies and grid solutions, without compromising reliability or affordability, through robust and aligned data-driven analysis and transparent planning without overburdening the development of solutions with time-intensive process.
- Customer service, affordability and reliability can be secured by creating a policy and regulatory environment that enables investments for long-term value, system efficiency and future rate certainty.
- Establish, enhance and optimize cost-recovery mechanisms and transparent data-driven metrics to achieve balanced outcomes for customers, utilities and Oregon.

Study Framework

Using the foundational principles identified above, below are categories for collaboration to secure Oregon's energy future.

Wildfire Policy

- Creation of a Wildfire Fund. The goal is to create a fund that could be accessed in the event of a catastrophic wildfire to compensate impacted individuals and businesses in a timely way and provide a shared safety net for utilities facing high wildfire costs, especially from catastrophic events. It is designed to make wildfire liability more predictable and manageable – protecting customers, stabilizing energy service and promoting investment in safety. Fund concepts create a pool of money potentially sourced from multiple contributors, including state governments, utilities (shareholders and customers) and other private industry partners related to wildfire prevention.

- Limitations of Liability. Along with funds, there should also be clear and effective limitations of liability relating to wildfires, including limitations on noneconomic damages. Limitations of liability are the single most effective measure for supporting utilities and reducing the cost of the risk borne by customers. Limitations of liability are a clear signal to investors about the risk they will bear by investing in a regulated utility in the state. Limitations of liability, in combination with a Wildfire Fund, also have the benefit of extending the overall life of funds created to compensate those affected by fires.

- Standards of Care. Defining standards of care by which a reasonable utility should operate to prevent wildfire provides certainty for utilities and customers. Wildfire mitigation plans are developed by utilities and approved by the Commission. Policies associated with certifying that a utility is operating to an approved wildfire mitigation plan should provide rebuttable presumptions in a court of law.

- Lowering The Costs. Limitations on attorneys fees and subrogation claims serve to reduce overall costs for utilities and customers. Certainty as to these costs help to ensure capital investment and lower costs for customers.

Regulatory Certainty and Efficiency

- Regulatory Lag. Regulatory lag results in a drag on a utility's financial ability to make continual progress in the investments needed to reliably serve its customers in a way that achieves state energy goals. It is important to more closely align cost recovery with when costs are incurred for all elements of revenue requirement. All tools, inclusive of cost-recovery mechanisms, that can improve efficiency and reduce regulatory lag should be explored (i.e., interim rate adjustments, trackers, true-up mechanisms, multi-year plans, etc.).

- Recovery of Operational Costs. New challenges in load growth and generation mix are creating a significant amount of volatility and uncertainty in the ability of utilities to recover the operational costs necessary to meet these challenges. Reviewing existing mechanisms, and the possible development of new mechanisms, to ensure that they are structured effectively to ensure that the incentives are aligned with the state's energy goals is important.

- Capital Recovery. Uncertainty in a utility's ability to recover costs for the capital investments needed to deliver on the state's energy goals can result in a drag on that utility's ability to make the necessary investments. Regulatory processes that can be used to improve certainty for the utility, with appropriate customer protections, will facilitate growth in needed energy infrastructure while promoting economic development, and these types of processes (i.e., pre-approvals) need to be evaluated.

- Guardrails. Customer protections are an important element of the clean energy transition. These protections serve as an important backstop to reign in potentially unexpected cost pressures that threaten affordability. A review of how these offramp protections are being, or could be, implemented, is needed to ensure they are able to function as intended considering both process and efficiency. Actions taken to trigger a guardrail need to be made in a timeframe that does not challenge effectiveness or that increases uncertainty and risk for the utility.

MEMORANDUM

Industrial Land Readiness Workgroup at Westside Economic Alliance

Date: February 11, 2026

WEA is pleased to bring you a summary memo resulting from months of workgroup discussion and collaboration with Metro staff. This memo is intended to be a starting point for a collaborative conversation where private sector partners can work with Metro to support a bright economic future for our region.

BACKGROUND

Metro is required to produce an updated Urban Growth Report (UGR) every six years as part of the growth management program. The UGR is used as the basis for urban growth boundary (UGB) expansion decisions. Throughout the 2024 UGR review process, participants raised concerns through various committees and Metro Council meetings about Metro's buildable lands methodology specific to counting industrial lands.

Metro's current methodology is not intended to specifically identify market-based industrial land needs for the region. The Buildable Land Inventory requires Metro to identify available lands that are currently zoned for industrial use but is not required to consider key site criteria factors based on market realities such as slope, utility infrastructure availability, and proximity to major highways.

While the UGR found that sufficient industrial lands for the next 20 years "exist" in the UGB, much of the land identified is not suitable to meet industrial development market demand due to site size, slope and other site constraints.

The most recent UGR was adopted in 2024 and used as the basis for the Sherwood West UGB expansion. In order to approve the City of Sherwood's UGB expansion request that included industrial lands, Metro staff used a targeted industry approach which showed that despite the substantial amount of industrial zoned land inside the UGB, this expansion was justified as none of those sites could meet the site needs of certain sectors.

In response to the UGR process and the concerns raised, members of MTAC asked MPAC and Metro Council to convene an Industrial Land Readiness Workgroup of industry experts to look more closely at Metro's buildable lands methodology. This memo is the result of that convening, providing background on the workgroup's discussions, goals and membership, along with recommended actions for Metro Council to consider.

WORKGROUP CONVENING

The **Industrial Land Readiness Workgroup** convened from February to September 2025. The workgroup's initial objective was to review the methodology used by Metro to count buildable employment industrial lands and present specific recommendations to better align the count of buildable industrial land with market realities. However, upon convening, it quickly became apparent that the issues faced by the region are bigger than methodology alone and that actions should go beyond technical fixes to include more substantive changes.

The workgroup was comprised of commercial real estate brokers and developers, private sector planners, economists, and public sector partners including city, county, regional and state partners. Metro staff both participated in, and served as advisors throughout, the process. We hope this work can result in a model of what can happen when we bring together experts from across our region to a single table using a solution-oriented approach to tackle big problems.

Two goals emerged from this workgroup:

1. To help Metro create a forecast process with growth scenarios that consider economic development interventions and market demand to create more aspirational forecasts, while still meeting State requirements.
2. To encourage Metro Council to center economic development through creation of an economic development focused "table" composed of technical staff and industry experts to strategize on technical fixes to ensure that industrial land availability can meet market demands in a timely manner.

Over the course of the convening, the workgroup committed to educating ourselves about Oregon's Statewide Land Use Planning Goal 9: Economic Development, forecasting and market analysis, and land readiness and investment needs for our region and state. It is within the context of this shared learning and the individual expertise offered by workgroup participants that we feel we can help Metro identify solutions that will unlock the potential of our region to grow a diverse and vibrant economy.

The WEA team produced a draft memo of recommendations and presented it to Metro Councilors and staff. During this series of meetings, WEA learned that Metro Council has formed an economic development working group, which includes Councilors Gonzales, Lewis and Simpson. WEA also learned that Metro staff is developing a proposal for Council consideration which includes actions that can be taken to support and enhance economic development in our region. "Job Ready Lands" will be one of their top priorities in this work.

As a result of collaboration with Metro staff and Council this memo has been updated. All of the original draft recommendations are retained but have been updated and reformatted to align and help shape the upcoming work of the Council on economic development. During this time, we also learned of the Governor's Roadmap to Prosperity effort including the creation of an Oregon Prosperity Council. This new effort will create an elevated opportunity for this work to be integrated into future legislative action.

We are determined to help find a path forward for the region to develop a 20-year and beyond employment land supply and economic forecasting system that reflects market realities, supports economic growth, and bridges public and private sector perspectives concerning ongoing economic uncertainty. We believe our region must prioritize building a future-focused economy. In addition to forecasting updates and other measures, the public and private sectors must work together in a meaningful way.

WEA will continue to be clear that experts from the private sector are critical to the success of these efforts. We've identified the problems and provided reasonable solutions. This work needs to move in real-time and not be slowed down by years of work where the process becomes the outcome. We stand ready to work alongside Metro to help our region realize Jobs Ready Land that will benefit our workforce, our economy and our communities.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO METRO:

Recommendation #1: Metro Council should adopt a resolution that acknowledges a clear problem statement similar to below.

- Our existing Urban Growth Report does not tell the full story of the region's long-term land supply. Much of the industrially zoned land is inadequate or undevelopable and does not meet the needs nor the criteria of the market demand. Metro should acknowledge this issue and partner with us to develop a strategy to evolve our regional approach to more accurately reflect our "buildable" land supply and take action to ensure that we do have adequate and appropriate buildable industrial land available to support a bright economic future for our region.

Recommendation #2: Metro Council should provide additional direct support for jurisdictions.

- Allocation of funding through the 2040 Planning and Development Grants for cities to bring on full FTE or hire consultants to support planning efforts including, but not limited to, analysis of and changes to zoning, comprehensive planning, and other planning needs related to growth for the duration of their economic analysis project. This should happen by the end of 2026.
- Help jurisdictions utilize site-specific, mid-cycle industrial land UGB expansions as appropriate. No city has utilized this process since it became available in 2010. While it is encouraging that such a process exists, its under-utilization points to it either being inaccessible or not cost-effective for cities to pursue.
    - If necessary, an outside consultant should be brought in with Metro resources to work with local jurisdictions on identifying what support they need to be successful in their future planning processes.

Recommendation #3: Metro Council should consider changes to Title 11 to support efficiency and better use of public funds.

We understand that this work is connected to other elements of the UGB expansion process. In order to better streamline processes to support efficiency and use of public funds, some initial suggestions include:

- Acknowledge that the concept plan phase is required to include a robust visioning/public process, including preliminary infrastructure funding plan, preliminary transportation and utility plans, and preliminary zoning plans.

- Because the concept plan phase includes all the required elements, amend Title 11 to require that the comprehensive plan phase be focused only on implementing the approved concept plan.
- Metro could use money saved from a slimmed down comprehensive plan phase to seed an infrastructure fund (revolving loan fund) or affordable housing fund for new urban areas.

Recommendation #4: Metro Council should pursue the following recommended technical fixes to refine the counting of employment land. To be completed by the end of Q4 2026.

- Develop and adopt a Grading/Tiering System that considers, including, but not limited to, Lot size, Geometry, Slope, Natural Features, Access to Infrastructure, Contiguity with other developable parcels.
- Seek changes to state law to encourage 'surplus' land supply, including the surplus of certain TYPES of land as identified by market analysis and input from industry.
    - This should be completed in time for policy movement in the 2027 Legislative Session.

Recommendation #5: Metro Council should adopt a forward-looking, market-guided methodology when modeling growth.

- Future UGR economic modeling should work to predict future economic performance including results from planned economic development interventions and growth opportunities. Following DLCD's Goal 9 recommendation that aspirational forecasting guides the work done to prepare the Urban Growth Report.
    - When launching the Urban Growth Report process, Metro should adopt an aspirational directive when forecasting their available land supply.

Recommendation #6: Metro Council should create and staff an "implementers table" that focuses on regional economic development, specifically land availability and readiness. To be created by the end of Q1 2026.

- We recommend a **new table, to be staffed by Metro, that centers the voices of business and industry with a focus on economic development, specifically land availability and readiness**.
    - This table should include industry experts and technical staff and serve as an advisory group to MTAC, MPAC and Metro Council.
    - This table can provide insight into best practices and review best practices from other states where cities have the opportunity and resources needed to grow.
    - This table can help identify where there are gaps in staffing, revenue, and policy.
    - This table can collaborate to support bimonthly/quarterly technical work sessions around commercial real estate development topics for MPAC, MTAC, and Metro Council with private sector subject matter experts to educate on the importance and benefits and development hurdles and quality of land supply in UGB.
    - This table can identify changes to the state land use system that would support the outcomes described in this memo.

    - This Table can be charged with identifying legislative and incentive gaps, workforce development needs, and regional synergies.
    - This table can provide feedback and input into the Governor's Oregon Prosperity Council & CEDS effort.

- **THE REPORT: Within one year, and then on an agreed upon periodic basis, this table should work with Metro staff to create a report that will outline economic realities and opportunities throughout the three counties**.
    - **We recommend that the first report be framed as a Regional Jobs Strategy to support future ongoing work**. **This strategy should be developed and adopted by the end of Q4 2026.**
    - This report should be presented to MTAC, MPAC and Metro Council and should be included as an addendum to the Urban Growth Report.
    - The report must discuss whether the current land supply meets market demands, identify if/where there is a mismatch and make recommendations to address the mismatch.
    - This report should also identify target industries, characteristics of land they require, identify locations where that land exists, and detail the improvements required to make that land development ready.
    - The report should identify technical fixes to existing Metro rules, plans or procedures for Metro Council consideration.
    - As an example, this report might echo the work done by the City of Hillsboro to provide economic projections and forecasts; it might provide lessons learned and highlight market successes and challenges; it would also be an opportunity to identify infrastructure and investment needs throughout the region.

Industrial Land Readiness Workgroup Members

NAME	ORGANIZATION	SECTOR
Elizabeth Mazzara Myers	Westside Economic Alliance	Convenor
Teddy Russell	Westside Economic Alliance	Staff
Kenneth Anderton	Port of Portland	Public Sector
Dan Dias	Hillsboro	Public Sector
Laura Edmonds	Clackamas County	Public Sector
Steve Koper	City of Tualatin	Public Sector
Steve Perkins	Clackamas County	Public Sector
Jamie Stasny	Clackamas County	Public Sector
Todd Duwe	Perlo	Private Sector
Steve Faust	3J Consulting	Private Sector
Gabriela Frask	Mackenzie	Private Sector
Jerry Johnson	Johnson Economics	Private Sector
Keith Leavitt	Confluence Strategies	Private Sector
Stu Peterson	Macadam Forbes	Private Sector
Ivy Quach	QB Fabrication & Welding	Private Sector
Kelly Ross	NAIOP/CAB	Private Sector
Steve Sieber	Trammell Crow	Private Sector
Brad Smith	Windsor Properties	Private Sector

Advisors

Eryn Kehe	Metro	Public Sector
Ted Reid	Metro	Public Sector
David Tetrick	Metro	Public Sector

Presenters

Leigh McIlvaine	DLCD	Public Sector
Gordon Howard	DLCD	Public Sector

NOTE: Metro staff attended the workshop and provided information and input but did not participate in the final drafting of the recommendations or memo. DLCD staff were invited as guest presenters and did not take part in the development of the recommendations or memo.

We have gotten to this point, in Oregon, because of the policies put in place over the last 40 years under progressive leadership, and doing the opposite is a logical solution if we want to end up in a different place.

Problems:

1. Too much regulation for businesses that has increased costs to operate in our state.
2. High taxes – income taxes, corporate activity tax, estate taxes, capital gains taxes
3. Poor k-12 results
4. Unfunded liabilities in PERS that cause more $$ to fund and fewer people to provide service
5. Outdated and Unrealistic Land Use Planning
6. Loosing companies to other states

Goals:

1. Keep existing companies in Oregon.
2. Attract new companies to Oregon.
3. Retain our Oregonians in our state.
4. Improve education and infrastructure
5. Get our fiscal house in order
6. Exit interviews with companies that have left Oregon

<u>Keeping companies in Oregon and attracting new ones:</u>

1. Eliminate recent regulations that have increased costs, decreased productivity and removed freedom of management in private industry.
    a. Eliminate mandatory paid vacation
    b. Eliminate paid leave
    c. Eliminate state-wide rent control

2. Eliminate the corporate activity tax. It has driven up costs for companies and individuals while doing nothing to improve k-12 education, which is what the funds are earmarked for.

Solve PERS over the next 10 years:

1. The single biggest thing we can do for economic development is eliminate the high-cost of PERS by removing the unfunded liability. PERS is killing all government services from fire to police to k-12 to high education.
    a. Earmark all tax receipts from the following toward paying down PERS:
        i. capital gains tax income
        ii. estate taxes
        iii. Income taxes in excess of 4% over the previous biennium.
    b. Use the earmarked funds to provide a 2 to 1 or 3 to 1 match for all agencies to receive $2/$3 for each $1 they put toward paying down their PERS unfunded liability.

Improve our k-12 ranking to above median in the USA:

1. We must change the system if we want change. Give power to the education consumer – the child and the parent.
2. Implement a voucher system whereby competition becomes part of our education system. Allow choice to improve the results.
3. Separate the special needs budget from the total education budget. Special needs funding remains as is.
4. The remainder of the k-12 budget is divided by the # of students excluding special needs. This identifies what the state provides per student.
5. Give each student 85% of the amount the state currently provides per student. The student may use the funds to attend any public or private school they wish to attend.
6. Public schools receive an allotment from the 15% not given to students. The balance of their budget is funded by students choosing to go to their school. Poor schools will close

just like a poor restaurant. Quality schools will thrive just like any quality product or service.

Keep Oregonians in Oregon:

1. Eliminate the estate tax or increase the exemption to match the Federal exemption, which is currently $15 million per person.
2. Reduce the capital gains tax from 9.9% to 3.9%.
3. Take the top tax rate of 9.9%, which was added in 2012 to 9%, and cap government spending growth to inflation + 1% per year. The goal being to gradually reduce the income tax rate if economic growth exceeds inflation +1%.
4. In the long run we would be better off with a diverse tax base including a 6% income tax, 3% capital gains tax, no estate tax and 5% sales tax. The only way this would ever work is if the tax code included a cap on revenue growth tied to inflation +1%. Without the cap, the citizens of Oregon will never trust adding a sales tax.

Increase state government efficiency:

1. Either cut the budget by 10% to force a focus on efficiency or hold the budget flat (no inflation adjustment) and allow time to trim people, departments and services that are bloated, unnecessary, or past their prime.

This is a starting point. There are other problems (infrastructure maintenance, homelessness, mental illness solutions, and others) that deserve attention in round II.

Higher Education

The problems that SOU are confronting are not unique to this institution. Recent financial estimates show that by 2031, without changes, all public universities in Oregon will have negative ending cash balances, leaving many in similar places to where SOU finds itself right now. Hopefully, our situation will be a clear warning sign for state lawmakers regarding the severity of the consequences if they continue to underfund higher education

How did we get here? Simple answer is a chronic underfunding of public universities in Oregon. Oregon spends less by far than our neighboring states on institutional support per student FTE, and less on student financial assistance. For years, we have been able to string together enough one-time funding to operate, but in the absence of those one-time funds and no additional ongoing revenue, the gaps between revenue and costs have become too large to manage.

At OSU, we face a very difficult budgetary situation, with cuts being made across the university. Public universities are an incredible engine of economic activity and transform the lives of our students. A recent study estimated that $1 of state investment in OSU results in $13 of increased economic activity. So, ask yourself again, what is your perception of Oregon's funding of public 4-year universities?

Table 10a: Regional Data, FY2024

	Funding per FTE	Financial Aid per FTE	Net Tuition as % of Total Revenue
California	11,344	1,831	33.7%
Idaho	10,351	449	51.9%
Nevada	11,500	2,220	23.6%
Washington	13,268	2,608	48.1%
Regional Average	**$11,616**	**$1,777**	**39.3%**
Oregon	6,200	1,146	69.7%
OR vs Average	**(47%)**	**(36%)**	**N/A**

Rural Oregon/ Agriculture

OSU Extension Service is a statewide asset that advances economic prosperity in rural communities by supporting small businesses, producers, workforce skills, and community capacity. Extension provides a direct pathway for translating research into practice and stands ready to play an expanded role in implementing statewide economic strategies in rural and resource-dependent regions.

OSU Extension programs reach approximately 90,000 youth annually through 4-H, supported by more than 8,000 volunteers and over 600 employees, providing a direct and scalable pathway to implement statewide economic strategies in rural and resource-dependent regions.

rising labor costs, complex regulatory frameworks, and regulatory disparities between Oregon and neighboring states have created a challenging economic environment that threatens the long-term viability of one of Oregon's longest standing and iconic agricultural sectors. A November 2025 Oregon State University study highlighted the growing burden of regulation costs, finding that small pear growers pay as much as $696 per acre in regulatory compliance costs alone, representing as much as 6.6% of total revenue and placing significant strain on already thin operating margins.

This partnership is essential for three reasons:
• **A stabilizing traded sector:** While technology fuels innovation and high growth, it can be cyclical. Agriculture and Food & Beverage provide durable, statewide economic output sustaining communities across the state through market shifts and economic downturns.
• **A fully integrated rural–urban value chain:** Agriculture uniquely connects rural production, urban processing, and global trade through Oregon's ports. Including this perspective ensures the Prosperity Roadmap advances a truly "One Oregon" economy.
• **Land-use and site-readiness expertise:** We noted your emphasis on industrial site readiness. As stewards of working lands, the agricultural community can help the state navigate land-use tensions in ways that expand economic opportunity while preserving long-term sector viability.

Land Use Laws first put in place in the 1970' were designed to protect open space and agricultural land. They are outdated and are a disservice to for forementioned. Southern Oregon has gone from 13,000 acres of pears to 3,000 and dwindling. If the economics are not there for agriculture people need alternatives to use their land, if not they will go out of business and the land will lay fallow.

Southern Oregon

Key takeaways:

- Jackson County's population stabilized in 2025, growing 0.1% (+325 residents YoY) after four years of decline—fragile, but a meaningful return to growth.
- Within that modest county gain, Medford added 1,208 residents between July 1, 2024 and July 1, 2025 (88,738 → 89,946), a 1.3% increase and roughly 4× the next-largest contributor in the Rogue Valley (Eagle Point, +325).

This local growth is contrasted by Oregon's weak performance on core business-climate metrics—business friendliness (47th), cost of doing business (43rd), and cost of living (45th). These CNBC "America's Top States for Business" rankings—widely used KPIs in state economic development—are informing Governor Kotek's Prosperity Roadmap and accelerating Business Oregon's first comprehensive statewide economic development strategy, to which we've been providing feedback alongside peers statewide.

What's interesting is the underlying assumption being challenged here: that population growth is primarily driven by business growth. Our local data, combined with national trends (notably remote work), suggest the inverse is increasingly true. Across the country, economic development best practices are shifting toward placemaking—with Bend serving as a useful case study. This is a fundamental (and sometimes unpopular) shift given its indirect impacts and timelines that extend beyond election cycles.

This perspective is informed by internal research Izrael has been instrumental in helping draft, supporting Economic Development's development of a market-adjusted, foundational ideology. Drafts are attached in case you're curious or if you're time crunched, here is a 6.5 minute video presentation we created for internal purposes that sums it all well.

By the way, national data reinforces this shift:

- NAR's 2024 Migration Trends show proximity to friends/family and housing affordability now drive most moves; job relocation plays no role for 43% of recent buyers, and employer office policies account for ~2%.
- Allied's 2024 & 2025 Migration Reports shows interstate moves down 7%, with growing preference for small and mid-sized cities where quality of life and affordability outweigh proximity to job centers.
- Analysts consistently note that remote work allows talent to prioritize climate, outdoor access, community feel, and affordability—forcing employers to follow talent rather than lead it.

From: **Lois Cho** lois@GETCHOWINES.COM
Subject: Fw: SEDCOR/CHO Wines Discussion Follow-up
Date: February 17, 2026 at 10:00 AM
To: Harry Clapsis harry@amperecomputing.com
Cc: Bogue, Emerald Emerald.Bogue@portofportland.com, renee@625.onmicrosoft.com, Robinhold, Curtis Curtis.Robinhold@portofportland.com

LC

EXTERNAL EMAIL:

Some further input from the EDO perspective.

Lois
Get Outlook for iOS

From: Abisha Romano <ARomano@sedcor.com>
Sent: Monday, February 16, 2026 10:36:50 PM
To: Lois Cho <lois@GETCHOWINES.COM>
Cc: Erik Andersson <EAndersson@sedcor.com>
Subject: SEDCOR/CHO Wines Discussion Follow-up

Hi, Lois

Thanks again for the great discussion regarding business support needs. I had it in my notes to send you a few examples of how the state might be able to better support business innovation and investments. Though we collective have 643+ examples to share, our team selected the short list below to start with. Please let me know if these types of examples are representative of what you're looking for. I have copied in our President, Erik Andersson, for follow-up questions or additional requests.

1. **The Company:** Chapul Farms is based in McMinnville and uses food industry waste streams as feedstock for black soldier flies. In this process, they upcycle organic waste streams into high-value feed and soil fertilizer. The majority of black soldier fly larvae and soil amendment we use in domestic farming comes from international sources. Their process provides a beneficial use for organic waste material, while creating a high-protein organic feed for chickens and other animals (larvae), and high value fertilizer.
    a. **The Problem/Opportunity:** DEQ does not know how to handle this company's request for managing their organic inputs (which is feedstock for the black soldier flies, and also waste from the food industry), like it's feedstock. Instead, they are forcing the company to secure local and state permits as a composting facility. Composting facility certifications can take upwards of 18 months and have very high requirements for product movement and air quality management. But this business is not composting any materials. Their system is fully enclosed and the inputs re handled like cattle or hog feed. Cost and timing to permit has caused several funding and timeline launch obstacles for the company. This would be a great opportunity for DEQ to be entrepreneurial and find stop-gap solutions for this company as they determine how best to classify this new, innovative and environmentally beneficial business process.
2. **The Company:** The Estate Bakery was a project that attempted to land in Yamhill County several years ago. This was seen by the owning partners and regional supporters as vertical integration on farming property near Perrydale. The partners owned farmland with existing facilities and grew ancient grains on-site. Their goal

was to begin milling the grains and producing high quality breads on-site. They also wanted to be an educational site for youth and students to learn about on-farm and processing practices. Plans were approved by the county and ultimately opposed by the 1,000 Friends of Oregon.

   a. **The Problem/Opportunity**: The biggest issue is how standing is established. In this instance, the project "died on the vine" because the 1,000 Friends took the issue to LUBA and for a nominal fee, they were able to put the business owner in a position of spending tens of thousands of dollars to secure an attorney to defend themselves. In Oregon, bread is not considered to be an agricultural product, therefore it does not fit into rules associated with farmstands, etc. As a point of comparison, jams, jellies and pies are considered to be agricultural products.

3. **The Company:** A local hazelnut processor is exploring investment in a biomass facility to help manage their waste stream.
   a. **The Problem/Opportunity**: In order to move forward, they would need to secure three separate air quality permits. That's just to manage air related environmental concerns. They also need to get permits related to land and water impacts. There are so many separate state departments for permitting these types of facilities and, though they do work to coordinate, it is a complex process. An example of how this is managed differently – in Washington state, they have the Department of Ecology, under which all the other environmental departments sit (DEQ, State Lands, Forestry, Water Resources, etc.)

We would also like to share insight into a few seemingly "easy" ways to streamline or simplify state programs for business. One example is the BOLI prevailing wage burden. When a project is both funded at a state and federal level, the project is required to pay both prevailing wage (state) and Davis Bacon (fed) wages, and track the hours and activities by person, per project to ensure they are being paid the right amount, based on which specific activity is being funded by which entity. This is big for the construction industry who vastly prefers paying the higher of the two wages, versus the very onerous task of tracking task by hour which contributes to a very high cost for administration and reporting. If the state simply said "If the project is both federally and locally funded, defer to the higher wage requirement" this would save huge amounts of time and cost. This simple change could be a big time and cost saver for municipal infrastructure projects and affordable housing projects.

Lois, this is already a very long email so I will stop here. Please let us know if we are hitting the mark and/or whether we can be of support in any way. We sincerely appreciate your participation in the Governor's Prosperity Council – thank you for being a busy person who committed to being even busier for the greater good.

Take care,
Abisha Romano
SEDCOR
503-507-4175

Governor's Prosperity Council

Lois Cho's Contributions for Meeting #2

February 17, 2026

Prepared by Lois Cho, Co-Founder & CEO of CHO Wines
Member, Governor's Prosperity Council

This document is a working summary prepared for internal use only. It captures initial discussion themes, questions, and hypotheses from initial discussions with key stakeholders interpreted by Council member Lois Cho and does not represent final positions, recommendations, or policy direction.

Please do not distribute externally or attribute specific viewpoints, as the Council is still in an active listening and evaluation phase.

Over the past month, I conducted a series of meetings and outreach efforts to gather input from industry and economic development stakeholders. This included meetings with the executive directors of the Oregon Wine Board, Willamette Valley Wineries Association, and Oregon Winegrowers Association; a presentation at the WVWA Annual Member Meeting; discussions with business owners at the Oregon Wine Symposium; and a distributed survey. Additional conversations were held with developers, small business owners, corporate wineries, legislators, lobbyists, and economic development organizations, as well as input from Oregon State University. The following section summarizes the themes that emerged from this outreach.

1. Current State: Oregon's Economic Context

Several stakeholders referenced broader economic indicators, including measures such as the Oregon Business Index and related analyses, which suggest that Oregon is facing challenges across multiple measures of competitiveness. Growth across major industry sectors appears uneven, and healthcare remains one of the few sectors consistently expanding, largely driven by demographic trends such as an aging population. Some participants noted that Oregon's largest employers have remained concentrated among a relatively small number of organizations, and that the state has seen limited emergence of new large-scale industry sectors contributing to broad-based economic growth.

There is also concern about fiscal constraints at the state level and uncertainty about how long-term economic development strategies will be funded. Some stakeholders observed that while regulatory streamlining and sector-specific initiatives are valuable, broader economic conditions (particularly job creation, wage growth, and disposable income) ultimately drive demand across many industries, including wine, agriculture, and hospitality. From this perspective, policies that strengthen overall economic health may have the most significant long-term impact on rural industries.

Stakeholders described differing perspectives regarding rural economic development and land use. Some emphasized the importance of preserving high-value farmland and limiting commercial uses in rural areas, consistent with Oregon's longstanding land-use framework. Others noted that rising costs, infrastructure limitations, and changing market conditions are creating pressure for agricultural businesses to diversify revenue through agritourism, direct sales, or limited hospitality uses. These perspectives reflect an ongoing effort to balance preservation with economic viability.

2. Observations from Wine Country Survey Responses

Survey responses from winery operators and growers reveal a consistent set of operational and structural concerns. In the near term, respondents most frequently cited regulatory complexity, permitting challenges, and the need for increased marketing support to strengthen awareness of Oregon wine in competitive markets. Access to capital, grants, and financing tools was also identified as an area where businesses would benefit from additional support.

Looking further ahead, respondents emphasized the importance of tax policy, incentives, workforce development, and research and development. Workforce challenges were a recurring theme, particularly related to housing affordability, seasonal labor availability, and rising wage pressures. Some respondents also noted that immigration policy and labor regulations affect their ability to plan and operate effectively, especially in sectors where work is seasonal and time-sensitive.

Businesses also reported that information about available programs, grants, and resources is often fragmented or difficult to navigate. This creates barriers to participation even when programs exist, and some suggested that improving communication and coordination could increase the effectiveness of existing initiatives without requiring significant new funding.

3. Structural Challenges Identified Across Discussions

Across multiple conversations, stakeholders described a broader structural challenge related to fragmentation. Oregon has many agencies, boards, and organizations working toward economic development, tourism promotion, agricultural support, and marketing, but coordination among these entities is not always clear. This fragmentation can result in overlapping efforts, inconsistent messaging, and reduced efficiency in how funds and programs are deployed.

This issue is not limited to a single sector. Participants noted that agriculture, tourism, and economic development programs often operate in parallel rather than in an integrated manner, which can make it difficult to implement cohesive strategies or measure statewide outcomes. While Oregon has strong institutions and programs, stakeholders frequently expressed the view that alignment and execution may be as important as additional funding.

Stakeholders described differing perspectives regarding rural economic development and land use. Some emphasized the importance of preserving high-value farmland and limiting commercial uses in rural areas, consistent with Oregon’s longstanding land-use framework. Others noted that rising costs, infrastructure limitations, and changing market conditions are creating pressure for agricultural businesses to diversify revenue through agritourism, direct sales, or limited hospitality uses. These perspectives reflect an ongoing effort to balance preservation with economic viability.

Recent legislative proposals, including House Bill 4153, illustrate the ongoing debate about how to balance farmland protection with the need for agricultural businesses to diversify through retail, agritourism, and value-added activities.

Role of Economic Development Organizations (EDOs)

- Regional Economic Development Organizations such as SEDCOR, EDCO, Greater Portland Inc., and SOREDI already operate extensive business-support networks.

- These organizations often have direct relationships with employers, entrepreneurs, and investors and can respond more flexibly than state agencies in certain circumstances.

- Some stakeholders suggested that the state could more effectively utilize existing nonprofit EDO networks rather than developing parallel structures.

- EDOs frequently partner with the Regional Solutions Department and local jurisdictions to assist businesses navigating permitting, infrastructure, and financing.

There was also discussion about whether the state might benefit from formally designating regional EDO partners in certain initiatives, particularly where existing networks and relationships already support economic development activities.

Examples of Programs and Partnerships

Examples discussed included:

- The **Rural Tax Exemption Program**, which can support major facility or equipment upgrades.
- The **Regional Innovation Hubs Program**, administered by Business Oregon, which supports entrepreneurial and innovation ecosystems.
  - Some organizations that do not qualify directly for state funding have partnered with affiliated nonprofits to secure philanthropic support.
- Programs supporting:
  - Entrepreneurial development
  - Agricultural technology initiatives
  - Workforce housing coalitions
  - Small infrastructure projects such as sidewalks and accessibility improvements
  - Employer support initiatives, including childcare access

Stakeholders noted that partnerships with universities, growers, and startups are already occurring in some regions, including on-farm trials and applied innovation projects.

Coordination Between State Agencies and Regional Partners

Several observations were made regarding coordination:

- Business Oregon is viewed by some stakeholders as effective in administering incentive and infrastructure programs but not positioned to address regulatory challenges directly.
- The **Regional Solutions Department** was described as historically effective in convening agencies to resolve interagency conflicts, particularly where businesses faced conflicting requirements from multiple regulators.
- Some stakeholders expressed the view that this coordination function has shifted in recent years toward infrastructure-focused projects, reducing its role in resolving regulatory bottlenecks affecting private-sector investment.

- There was discussion about whether Regional Solutions coordinators or similar mechanisms could be more actively utilized to help address complex permitting challenges.

Several stakeholders, including higher education partners, emphasized that Oregon’s challenge is less about identifying priorities and more about aligning institutions, agencies, and regional partners around shared goals and execution. Having the universities at this table could also be a part of the solution.

Universities also play a role in translating research into companies and jobs, supporting applied research, startup formation, and industry partnerships. Since 2013, Oregon State University alone has generated nearly 200 startups that have attracted significant private investment, demonstrating the potential of research institutions as economic development partners.

4. Land Use and Regulatory Complexity

Land use policy emerged as one of the most complex and sensitive topics in discussions. Many stakeholders acknowledged that Oregon’s land use framework has played a significant role in preserving farmland and preventing sprawl, outcomes that are widely valued by agricultural producers. At the same time, businesses involved in agritourism and rural hospitality reported challenges related to permitting, county-level interpretation of rules, and litigation risk, all of which can introduce uncertainty and delay investment.

Some stakeholders also noted that updating soil classifications or land-use designations can be costly and time-consuming, creating barriers to adaptive land management. Preservation advocates, however, emphasized that protecting high-value farmland remains essential to maintaining Oregon’s agricultural economy over the long term, and that certain types of development (particularly large-scale or resort-style projects) raise legitimate concerns about cumulative impacts.

These differing perspectives reflect a shared interest in maintaining a strong agricultural base, but differing views on how to balance preservation with economic diversification in rural areas.

5. Workforce and Cost Pressures

Workforce issues were consistently identified as a major constraint across industries. Rising housing costs in rural communities make it difficult for workers to live near employment centers, and businesses report ongoing challenges in recruiting and retaining staff. Seasonal industries, including agriculture and hospitality, face additional complexity because labor demand fluctuates significantly throughout the year.

Some stakeholders expressed concern that certain labor policies do not fully account for the seasonal and time-sensitive nature of agricultural work, while others emphasized the importance of maintaining worker protections and fair compensation. In addition to labor costs, businesses also cited rising input costs, transportation expenses, and utilities as contributing to financial pressure, particularly for small and medium-sized enterprises.

Higher education institutions, including Oregon State University, identified workforce development and talent pipelines as central to long-term economic competitiveness. Universities play a significant role in aligning degree programs, credentials, and applied learning with sector needs and regional workforce demands, particularly through partnerships with employers and community colleges.

Agricultural employers and processors noted that workforce availability and cost pressures remain significant challenges. Seasonal production cycles, labor shortages, and increasing wage and overtime requirements can create operational constraints, particularly in labor-intensive sectors such as specialty crops and winegrape production. Some stakeholders also noted that mechanization and innovation may play a growing role in addressing long-term labor constraints.

6. Marketing and Tourism Coordination

Marketing and tourism coordination emerged as another area of concern. Oregon's food, beverage, wine, and agricultural sectors are widely recognized as significant contributors to the state's economy and identity, yet stakeholders often described marketing efforts as fragmented across regions, organizations, and agencies. This fragmentation can make it difficult to present a unified statewide narrative, particularly in national or international markets.

Several participants compared Oregon's approach to that of other states with well-known wine regions, where statewide branding and coordinated marketing strategies are more centralized, and regional differentiation occurs within a broader framework. Stakeholders emphasized that stronger alignment does not necessarily require new organizations or funding, but may benefit from clearer roles, shared priorities, and more consistent messaging across existing institutions.

7. Cautious Recommendations

Based on discussions with industry stakeholders, regional economic development organizations (including insights shared by Abisha Romano of SEDCOR) and survey responses, several measured recommendations emerge. These reflect common themes around coordination, workforce, marketing, and regulatory predictability, while recognizing fiscal and structural constraints.

1. Improve Coordination Using Existing Structures

- Strengthen alignment between agencies already in place, including economic development, workforce, tourism, and regulatory agencies

- Clarify roles and communication channels among state agencies, regional economic development organizations, and industry groups

- Better utilize existing regional networks, including nonprofit Economic Development Organizations.

- Reduce duplication of efforts and improve information-sharing across agencies and partners

2. Increase Transparency and Outcome Reporting

- Publish clear annual metrics for publicly funded programs where feasible
- Link funding to measurable outcomes when appropriate
- Improve visibility into how existing programs, grants, and incentives are deployed and evaluated

3. Prioritize Workforce and Housing Solutions

- Support housing development in rural employment centers
- Explore policies tailored to seasonal and agricultural workforce needs
- Strengthen partnerships among workforce agencies, employers, and regional organizations to improve access to training and employment pathways

4. Strengthen Marketing and Branding Alignment

- Develop a clearer statewide narrative for Oregon's food, beverage, and agricultural sectors
- Encourage collaboration across regions, industries, and marketing organizations. Just as the Regional Solutions Department has historically served a coordinating role across agencies, consideration could be given to a similar statewide coordinating function within Business Oregon, with representation from regional visitor associations and industry partners, structured in a way that reflects economic impact and regional contributions. Use this pathway to more effectively disseminate information about available opportunities, programs, and incentives to business owners.
- Improve coordination among agencies and partners involved in tourism, agriculture, and regional marketing efforts

5. Improve Regulatory Predictability and Problem-Solving

- Provide clearer guidance early in permitting and regulatory processes
- Improve consistency across counties and agencies where possible
- Continue exploring ways to strengthen interagency coordination to help resolve complex permitting or infrastructure challenges affecting businesses
- Emphasize practical problem-solving and continuous improvement in regulatory processes, particularly where multiple agencies are involved

8. Concluding Observation

A theme repeated in many conversations was that Oregon's economic challenges are not due to a lack of assets or talent, but to fragmentation, rising costs, and difficulty translating plans into coordinated action. Stakeholders across industries expressed appreciation for many existing programs and institutions, while also noting that outcomes may be improved through stronger alignment and execution.

The opportunity ahead may lie less in creating new programs and more in strengthening:

- Alignment
- Clarity
- Accountability
- Execution

Pillar	Administrative Actions (Short-Term)	2027 Legislative Proposals (Medium-Term)	Structural Challenges (2–5 Years)
Business Climate	Executive orders on permitting timelines; agency coordination; regulatory clarity	Tax structure adjustments; incentive expansion; R&D credits	Land-use reform; zoning flexibility; long-term tax modernization
Workforce	Workforce training alignment; credential portability; agency streamlining	Investment in training pipelines; incentives for skilled worker attraction	Education-to-employment alignment; regional talent ecosystems
Tools for Growth	Inventory and optimize existing programs; faster deployment of grants	Scaled incentive programs; capital access for mid-sized firms	Long-term funding models; innovation infrastructure

	Business Climate	Workforce	Tools for Growth
Administrative Actions (Short-Term)	Improve interagency coordination and communication.	Improve alignment between workforce programs and industry needs	Inventory and improve coordination of existing grants, loans, and incentive

	Provide clearer permitting guidance and timelines Improve consistency in regulatory interpretation across jurisdictions Better utilize regional Economic Development Organizations (EDOs) to connect businesses with programs and incentives. Explore reprioritization of the Regional Solutions Department for the above. Improve visibility and accessibility of existing grants, loans, and technical assistance via Business Oregon. Involve representation of different EDOs and DMOs within Business Oregon.	Streamline access to training and workforce resources Strengthen coordination among workforce agencies, employers, regional partners and universities. Improve dissemination of information about training and workforce support programs	programs Accelerate deployment timelines for funding programs where feasible Improve communication of funding opportunities to businesses Strengthen partnerships with regional Economic Development Organizations, DMOs, and universities
2027 Legislative Proposals (Medium-Term)	Review tax thresholds and structures affecting small and mid-sized businesses Expand or refine incentive programs to support business expansion and investment Support research,	Invest in workforce training pipelines aligned with key industries and universities. Support employer-led training, apprenticeships, and credentialing programs. Explore incentives to	Expand access to capital and financing tools, particularly for mid-sized firms Support regional innovation initiatives and applied research partnerships Consider scaled incentive programs

	development, and applied innovation partnerships Consider policies that improve regulatory predictability for business development	attract and retain workers in rural communities	that support business expansion and modernization
Structural Challenges (2-5 Years)	Improve long-term clarity and predictability in land-use and permitting processes while maintaining farmland protections. Invest in core infrastructure (water, wastewater, transportation, utilities) needed to support economic growth, particularly in key sector areas. Modernize economic development incentives and improve coordination across agencies and regions.	Expand housing availability in rural employment centers and prioritize permitting. Strengthen education-to-employment pathways and regional talent pipelines. Address long-term workforce participation challenges, including transportation, childcare, and demographic shifts.	Develop more stable, long-term funding models for economic development programs. Strengthen innovation infrastructure and applied research partnerships. Prioritize infrastructure and programs that support business expansion and job creation.

SDAO
FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES CHAPTER

OFDDA Since 1950 OREGON FIRE DISTRICT DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION
EDUCATION • COORDINATION • LEGISLATION

To: **Governor Kotek's Prosperity Council**

From: **Chief Brian Stewart**
Clackamas Fire District
Oregon Fire Chiefs Association

Chief Ben Stange
Polk County Fire District No. 1
EMS and Fire Chapter of SDAO

Brad King
Junction City Rural Fire Protection District
Oregon Fire District Directors Association

Date: **March 4, 2026**

Re: **The Impact of Tax Abatement Programs on Rural Fire Protection Districts and Emergency Medical Services.**

Tax abatement programs encourage development but subsequently increase the demand for emergency services. Unfortunately, Rural Fire Protection Districts (RFPDs) currently lack the means to offset the funding they lose to these tax abatement programs. This situation diverts emergency response resources from existing users who are paying full taxes to the RFPD. We urge you to consider the impact of tax abatement programs on emergency services and to find ways to sustainably fund fire and emergency medical services (EMS) by modifying existing enterprise zones, strategic investment programs, or similar economic development tools.

For instance, reductions in fire and EMS funding resulting from enterprise zones can negatively affect the quality of life that Oregon promotes. Ultimately, this undermines both businesses and individuals, making it more difficult for them to thrive safely in their communities. Implementing a dedicated fee could help offset the property tax revenue lost due to the expansion of enterprise zones. There is already a precedent for such a fee established in the Oregon Economic Development Omnibus Bill, HB 2009, which passed in 2023 and required Zone Sponsors to negotiate a fee to benefit K-12 education under certain circumstances. A similar program should be instituted for RFPDs.

Another possible solution is to exempt fire districts from future property tax deferments, as outlined in HB 2980 from the 2023 session. This bill, sponsored by Representative Marsh and Senator Anderson, aimed to award grants to developers of affordable housing, funded by local government property tax exemptions. During legislative testimony, the bill's sponsors recognized that RFPDs would face challenges in providing services to new developments without the necessary property tax revenue. As a result, they amended the bill to effectively exempt fire districts from these deferments.

Justin Dillingham, Board President of Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue, recently stated, "TVF&R serves eleven cities across four counties and more than 500,000 residents; as Oregon's largest fire district, we support strong economic development efforts. However, growth must not come at the expense of public safety—fire and emergency medical infrastructure must be fully considered and sustainably funded whenever development incentives are expanded."

The 2025 Convening of the Oregon Fire Service Report, endorsed by the Governor's Fire Service Policy Council, highlights the funding crisis facing RFPDs across Oregon. The report notes that agencies throughout the state are experiencing a significant increase in the frequency and intensity of calls, driven by population growth, unprecedented social issues, and community expansion. Additionally, the report points to steep increases in the costs of materials and services used by RFPDs.

RFPDs are grappling with challenges, including rising emergency medical services (EMS) call volumes and increasing capital costs, while property tax revenues remain stagnant. Many RFPDs depend on voter-approved Local Option Levies for financial support. Unfortunately, there seems to be a decline in public backing for these funding measures. For example, in November 2025, two local option levies in Lane County failed, resulting in service cuts and indicating growing taxpayer resistance in Oregon. These failures have immediate repercussions for local communities and serve as a warning to the state about the vulnerability of fire and EMS services to funding reductions.

Unlike cities, special districts have limited authority to raise revenue and do not receive shared revenue, except for 9-1-1 districts. Additionally, fire districts do not receive systems development fees, utility fees, or transient lodging taxes. As a result, when property taxes are deferred through enterprise zones and other exemptions, fire districts are expected to expand their services to meet the demands of new development without receiving any additional funds. This situation is simply not sustainable.

While the Prosperity Council is focused on future initiatives, the 2026 legislative session included provisions in several bills to broaden the use of enterprise zones. RFPDs primarily rely on property tax revenues to fund their operations, and tax abatement programs reduce these revenues, thereby negatively impacting RFPD budgets and services. The Prosperity Council's recommendations on tax relief programs will provide key directions for future legislation and will affect the availability of fire and EMS services for both existing, full-tax-paying community members and new developments. These recommendations should include provisions to ensure that the essential fire and emergency medical services that Oregonians expect and deserve are maintained.

Respectfully,

Ben Stange

Chief Ben Stange
Fire and EMS Chapter of SDAO

Brian Stewart

Chief Brian Stewart
Oregon Fire Chiefs Association

Brad King

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Oregon Fire District Directors Association

Portland Metro Chamber

2026 State Legislative Action Plan

January 2026

Portland's economic health is a smart state investment

The 2025 report, ***Portland Region's Impact on State Fiscal Health*** report from ECOnorthwest, showed that taking legislative action to support Portland's economic growth benefits all Oregonians. Oregon's economic vitality and state fiscal health are deeply intertwined with the health and prosperity of its largest metropolitan hub: the Portland tri-county region, comprising Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties. Investments made in the Portland region drive revenue that supports communities statewide, fostering economic resilience and supporting critical services. The data was clear – after adjusting for population size, the Portland region consistently provides an outsized share of tax revenue across nearly all of the state's six major revenue streams. Consider the following:

- The Portland region's residents contribute a **56% premium, per capita,** to state tax revenues and Multnomah County contributes the highest amount, per capita, to state coffers of any county in Oregon.
- The Portland region is home to **43% of the state's residents, 50% of jobs, and 58% of the state's economic output.**
- This is true for Multnomah County, which is home to **19% of the state's population,** while funding **24% of total tax revenue, 22% of the personal income tax,** and **27% of the corporate income tax.**
- **Annual state tax revenue contribution per capita:**
    - Multnomah County: $5,570
    - Portland Tri County Region: $5,440
    - Rest of the State of Oregon: $3,580

State Policy Priorities

To ensure the long-term sustainability of the critical symbiotic relationship between the health of the Portland economy and funding for critical state programs, Portland and Multnomah County public and private-sector leaders call on our partners in the Oregon State Legislature to support targeted strategic investments. Together, we have identified key investments that are most critical to support the Portland region's long-term economic health, thus sustaining the rest of the state.

Support professional sports, arts, and entertainment franchises, organizations, and venues

- Support the We Play for Portland coalition and the Portland Trail Blazers to ensure Portland remains Rip City for future generations of Oregonians and to support the growth of the WNBA. In addition to being the home of the Blazers, the Moda Center is one of Oregon's largest and most important entertainment venues where millions of Oregonians gather every year. It is also the oldest NBA arena to have never undergone a major renovation. We support **SB 1501** and renovations to Oregon's Arena (Moda Center).
- In 2025, the Portland Trail Blazers, Timbers, Oregon Symphony, Oregon Ballet Theatre, Portland Art Museum, Sport Oregon, Portland Metro Chamber and others founded the We Play for Portland Coalition to work together to attract more fans, increase support, and revitalize Portland through sports, arts, and culture. While the organizations offer different types of events, they share a deep connection to the city and its public-owned performance halls and sports facilities.
- To fully realize the potential of riverfront major league baseball and the investments made in Portland's waterfront, we must also ensure a healthy Willamette River. We support a request for $1M in state funding to restore river flow to the Ross Island lagoon. This will address this recurring threat to public health and human activity in the river paving the way to realizing the full economic and cultural impact of a Major League Baseball franchise, a waterfront stadium, the Albina Rose Alliance, and a fully modernized, activated Waterfront. Metro, Multnomah County, and the City of Portland have committed funding to the project.

Invest in the circular economy

- Turn waste into wealth by supporting **HB 4086** to fund $225K each for four communities to identify and advance a high-potential industrial symbiosis (IS) project that strengthens local industry, creates jobs, and reduces emissions and waste. By the end of the first year, each community will have a clearly defined, feasible capital project concept—complete with partners, preliminary design information, cost range, and funding pathway—ready to compete for design and construction funding.

Defend economic development and work force funding

- Defend Higher Education and Workforce Development. Portland's recovery depends on attracting businesses investment to create family wage jobs, but the investment to prepare Oregonians for the 21st century economy continues to fall behind. As our region competes with our peer markets, we risk losing ground in training and retaining the skilled workers employers need. It will be far more challenging to grow and recruit businesses to rebuild our economy if we waver in our commitment to job training and workforce investment. Protecting higher education is critical to Portland's economic future and should be prioritized in budget decisions.
- **Oppose HB 4134, HB 4148 and SB 1562** which would direct state and local Tourism and Lodging Taxes (TLT) away from programs that drive economic vitality and growth. This is the worst possible time to undermine the competitiveness of our tourism industry and take investment away from programs that have an economic multiplier effect.

Support funding for the Williams and Russell Business Hub

Support **SB 5701** that would make investments in the Williams & Russell Business Hub, Lan Su Garden expansion and the Broadway Corridor project.

- **Williams & Russell Business Hub:** Create an incubator for entrepreneurs and small businesses in Portland's Albina neighborhood.
- **Lan Su Garden:** Transform this classic Portland landmark to expand the organization's opportunities for education and celebration.
- **Broadway Corridor:** Create nearly 4 million square feet for new high-density employment, mixed-income housing, and signature attractions and amenities.

Elevate economic development as a core state priority

- **Support HB 4084 and Governor Kotek's Oregon Prosperity Agenda:** The Portland Metro Chamber and our partners strongly support the Governor's leadership in formally acknowledging the need for change and stronger public-private partnership across the state. Reversing Oregon's downward economic trajectory will require a focused, strategic policy approach that addresses the root causes of our persistent economic barriers. The Governor's commitment to tangible change and engagement with the business community is encouraging and necessary to ensure a vibrant economic future for the Portland Metro Region and the entire State of Oregon.
- **Business Recruitment:** Direct Business Oregon to use existing strategic planning resources to develop and implement a coordinated business recruitment plan with specific KPIs across the state as a core part of the agency's strategic plan for the coming years. Align with local economic development plans such as the Prosper Portland Advance Portland.
- **Business Incentives:** Support business incentives introduced in 2026 and work with key legislators and stakeholders to develop a robust package of incentives for legislative adoption in early 2027. State, regional, and local incentives should be coordinated and aligned.
- **Advanced Manufacturing:** Support the regional advanced manufacturing jobs legislation currently under development, which will seek to expand the use of Research & Development Tax Credits, establish a local option capital property tax holiday for building or modernizing new advanced manufacturing facilities, and adjust Enterprise Zone requirements.
- **Opportunity Zone Designation:** Work with the City of Portland to secure designations of priority Opportunity Zones in Portland during the required Gubernatorial Designation Process.
- **Federal Tax Code:** Preserve the full value of financial tools that drive private investment in Portland.

Housing production and shelter

- Defend state investments in housing production, housing related infrastructure, and shelter operations.

Protect the existing funds in the Moderate-Income Revolving Loan Fund.

- Support City adoption of a local ordinance to allow the City to apply for MIRL funds and the City's grant request in early 2026 to support Broadway Corridor.
- Align the underlying policies for all State and Local housing production incentives.
- Oppose legislation that will add unfunded mandates or increase legal liabilities to local affordable housing programs.
- Continue to support the largest shovel ready housing and place development projects in Oregon: Broadway Corridor, OMSI District, and Albina-Rose Alliance.
- **SDC Payment Timing Reform:** Require System Development Charges (SDCs) for residential construction to be paid at the point of impact, upon issuance of Certificate of Occupancy, rather than upfront during construction.
- **Continue to empower the Housing Accountability and Production Office:** Provide resources and direction to HAPO that will allow the Office to track local jurisdiction's progress toward housing targets, fee burden on new development, and turnaround time for new residential permits. Consider enforcement mechanisms for municipalities that fail to meet housing targets despite development interest and activity. To avoid muddling policy objectives, HAPO should be removed from the Department of Land Conservation and Development and placed under the direct supervision of the Governor's office.

Expand buildable land supply

- Support amendments to **SB 1537** to allow municipalities to take advantage of the UGB expansion opportunities intended in the original bill.

Encourage and support development of essential economic infrastructure

- Electricity, natural gas, and liquid fuels, as well as transmission lines, pipelines, roads, bridges, rail, and marine infrastructure are critical to recruit new and maintain existing businesses. Without these critical energy supplies and infrastructure, economic development will be stymied, and investments will be made in other regions.
- Support and encourage critical infrastructure – maintenance, improvements, and new construction to support new and existing businesses.
- Support the diversification of energy supplies to meet future demand and protect against supply disruptions.
  Participate in defending these key energy and infrastructure investments against challenges.

Maintain community livability

- Work with cities and business to reform or replace **HB 3115** to align with the Supreme Court Grants Pass v Johnson ruling to allow local governments to more effectively reduce the impacts of unsanctioned camping.
- Advocate for ODOT to reinstate their IGA with the City of Portland for the cleanup of ODOT-owned lands and rights of way in Portland and to allocate a minimum of $2M per year to the work.
- Support efforts to address Portland police officer staffing needs to strengthen emergency response times and enhance community public safety.
- Defend investments in behavioral health, public safety, and shelter.

Reduce administrative burden on business

- Businesses and industry associations across the state continue to ask for the state to help reduce duplicative and onerous processes to make it easier and less expensive to do business in Oregon. The Oregon Competitiveness Agenda provides a roadmap for this critical reform work.

- Defend Oregon’s health systems and hospitals from additional regulations and mandates that continue to drive unsustainable growth in operational costs.

Portland Metro Chamber

2026 Regional Policy Agenda

The Chamber works to shape public policy in areas most impactful to the local business community and Portland metro region at-large. We accomplish this through a combination of information sharing, education, coalition building, and active lobbying at the local, regional, state, and federal levels. Chamber members actively participate in shaping our advocacy agenda.

Portland is at a cross roads

Portland and the region must accept and grapple with three key economic truths:

1. In the next decade and beyond, the Portland region must compete with other metropolitan regions for population growth, businesses, events, and jobs.
2. The region's housing crisis is at a breaking point with housing production virtually at a halt. We must strongly encourage the private sector to build housing again at scale.
3. We must incentivize and accelerate the growth of businesses to ensure we have the revenue to fund the state and local services that our residents expect and count on. New or increased taxes are unpopular with voters and will only dig our region into a deeper hole. We must look for ways to reform or reduce our tax burden to put the region back on a competitive growth trajectory.

Our Policy Priorities:

Advance Economic Growth and Shared Prosperity to Generate Tax Revenue

The Portland region must adopt a competitive mindset. The region can no longer count on population growth alone to drive economic and revenue growth. Recent years have seen the precipitous decline of the region's core strengths which fueled decades of growth — relative affordability to our peers, livability, vibrancy, and public safety. With tepid voter support for new or increased taxes, the Portland region must immediately prioritize growing the tax base as its top revenue generation strategy With virtually all local governments funded primarily by business and property taxes, urgent strategic priorities include supporting our entrepreneurs, growing our businesses, and recruiting large employers. As revenues continue to decline, the public sector at all levels will need to advance public-private partnerships to meet our shared goals.

Priorities:

- Make downtown the best place to sign a lease
    - Extend and strengthen the Downtown Business Incentive Tax Credit beyond its current restriction to downtown by expanding it to districts such as Lloyd, Old Town, Central Eastside, and Pearl, and pair this program with Multnomah

County Business Income Tax relief for qualifying leases. This will make it more affordable for companies to lease space in the city’s core, helping fill empty offices, support local jobs, and increase future assessed property values and general fund revenue.

  - Develop a public-private program with City of Portland to develop an empty storefronts program that brings local artists, pop-up businesses, and other entrepreneurial opportunities to empty retail storefronts. Design the program based on proven models in Denver and Minneapolis.
  - Make renewed return- to- office push focused on public sector employers to bring their employees back to office at least three days a week. Develop a clear, data-based understanding of the remaining opportunity to grow downtown employee foot traffic with existing employer base.
  - Partner with Made in Old Town to strengthen its ties and coordination with Athletic and Apparel Industry leaders and align it with industry goals.

- Expand Enterprise Zone competitiveness to the entire Central City
  - Simplify the Enterprise Zone program by eliminating the extra payments to local school districts currently required by participating businesses in the fourth and fifth years of their property-tax exemption period, for new agreements and where feasible, adjusting existing agreements.
- Expand the Business Expansion Program to support job growth and align county and state incentives
  - Commit to steady, multi-year funding for the City of Portland’s Business Expansion Program, with clear and transparent criteria for awards that reward businesses for creating new jobs and investing in tenant improvements.
  - Work with the state to allow Portland to use the Strategic Investment Program for major mixed-use or redevelopment projects in the city.
- Help small and growing businesses thrive

- Raise the City's Business License Tax and the County's Business Income Tax gross-receipts exemption to $150,000 and index the threshold to inflation. This will reduce paperwork and costs for startups and small businesses, strengthening the city's business ecosystem and future tax base.
- Develop a public financing solution to tackle the significant deferred maintenance and modernization of Portland's iconic sports and entertainment venues, including the full renovation of the Moda Center, which is the oldest NBA arena to have never undergone a major renovation. State and City leaders must take all necessary public finance, policy, and infrastructure actions to guarantee the Portland Trail Blazers franchise continues for future generations of Oregonians and continues to support other Portland sport franchises like the Portland Fire, Thorns and Timbers.
- Advocate at the state level to reform System Development Charges (SDC) to be used for deferred maintenance and address our crumbling city assets.
- Permitting and development services should meet predictable and competitive timelines for permit approval. The City of Portland and all local governments must adopt plans to make optimal use of all industrial lands and ensure we have the necessary land supply to accommodate economic growth.
- The city should continue to take all necessary actions to rapidly advance a series of generational economic development opportunities that pass the Central City onto future generations: Broadway Corridor, New Albina/Rose Quarter, Future OMSI District, Zidell Yards, Lloyd Center, PSU.
- Government partners at all levels should continue to advance both the I-5 Bridge Replacement project and Rose Quarter transportation infrastructure projects.
- Continue to collaborate with Cascadia Mega Region partners to advance Cascadia high speed rail.
- The City of Portland must continue to be a full partner with the Portland Diamond Project and bring Major League Baseball to the Rose City.
- The City of Portland, Multnomah County, and the State of Oregon should partner to stabilize and invest in our historic festivals,

performing arts venue infrastructure and operations, and the future of the Expo Center and Moda Center.

- The City of Portland must make economic growth the highest and best use of Tax Increment Finance district funds aligned with the Advance Portland economic development strategy.
- Multnomah County must expand its partnership with Oregon State University extension and the OSU Food Innovation Center as one of its core economic development investments. Extension matches the county's financial contributions 3:1, leveraging additional state and federal dollars to ensure support for small farms, gardens, and urban agriculture; support for the food and beverage industry sector including the James Beard Public Market, and youth development efforts.

Adjust the Tax Burden to be Consistent with Peer Regions

The cost of living and doing business in Portland has become uncompetitive. Portland's cost of living is 12% above the national average, driven largely by the cost of housing and an uncompetitive tax burden. Portland now has the nation's second-highest marginal personal income tax rate at 14.7%, the highest corporate rate at 20.9%, and business taxes have increased 81% since 2019. Portland has lost approximately $1 billion in taxable income annually since 2020, primarily to Clark County in SW Washington. The continued loss of taxable income and population stagnation signals that Portlanders are voting with their feet in response to high costs, declining service quality, and lagging return on taxpayer investments.

With voter tolerance for new revenue at historic lows due to dissatisfaction with poor government performance, regional and local leaders must shift away from relying on additional taxes to fund basic services. We must urgently shift to a competitive strategy that grows the tax base by attracting high and middle-wage employers and families, as well as private investment. With government revenues projected to decline precipitously for the foreseeable future, local leaders must collaborate to lower the tax burden, prioritize essential core services and programs that bring returns on investment, and cut non-essential spending and reform or eliminate specialty taxes.

Governor Kotek’s Central City Task Force Tax Advisory Group (TAG) has developed a roadmap for fiscal reform that, if fully implemented, will achieve the goal of making Portland more competitive with our peer cities.

Priorities:

The Portland Metro Chamber strongly supports adoption and implementation of all 19 recommendations for fiscal reform advanced by the Central City Task Force TAG. The Chamber calls for urgent action on the following five top priorities in 2026:

- Refer to voters a choice between maintaining PCEF’s structure or using revenues above original projections for selected general fund priorities
    - Preserve the Portland Clean Energy Fund’s (PCEF) current funding structure, dedicating all surcharge revenues to climate-related and community-focused programs, or
    - Authorize the City to allocate revenues collected above the original projected range (i.e., above $90 million annually) to support a limited set of urgent general fund priorities, as identified in the referred measure.
- Index local Income tax thresholds to inflation to preserve fairness and policy integrity
    - Amend the Preschool for All (PFA) and (Supportive Housing Services (SHS) tax codes to include an annual inflation adjustment for their income thresholds, using a widely accepted measure such as the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U).
- Support the Governors call to reevaluate the Preschool for All Program to ensure long term viability, while aligning to voters’ expectations.
    - Substantially reduce reliance on a local income tax to fund the Preschool for All program and explore statewide solutions for universal preschool.
- Institutionalize “soft sunsets” and structured reviews to ensure accountability without sacrificing stability

    - Establish a “soft sunset” framework for all new local tax measures. Each measure would be authorized for a 10-year period, with a structured performance review conducted at year five. Programs demonstrating progress and alignment with goals would continue without interruption. Measures with unresolved delivery or governance concerns could be re-evaluated and adjusted before reaching their full term.

- Raise signature thresholds and require Economic Impact Statements for tax-raising initiatives
    - Raise the signature threshold for ballot initiatives that establish, increase, or dedicate tax revenues. This could mean requiring a higher percentage of voter signatures or tying qualifications to turn out in a recent high-participation election, like during a presidential cycle.
    - In parallel, require all tax-related initiatives—regardless of origin—to be accompanied by an independent Economic Impact Statement.

Prioritize Funding Core Services

The City of Portland must refocus its resources and efforts on delivering essential core services—public safety, infrastructure maintenance, and basic city operations.

Urgently Build Housing of All Types

The Portland region's extreme housing shortage must be treated like a true crisis. In 2023, Portland's cost of housing was 30% higher than the national average, and that number continues to grow. This continues to be a significant hinderance to the region's economic competitiveness. Virtually all data and research agree that the primary driver of homelessness and economic instability is high housing costs.

The region's high housing costs were created by historic levels of underproduction in the last decade, while the population, driven by migration, grew rapidly. With housing production in Portland at a virtual halt, emergency action must be taken to adopt policies, incentives, and deregulation to ignite housing production of at least 6,000 units annually. New housing production needs to include all types of housing and promote homeownership opportunities to protect against displacement and to build generational wealth. Governments in the region must also adopt policies to spur adequate supply growth in the multifamily housing market, while leveraging public infrastructure, prioritizing new investments, and making land available for housing.

Priorities:

- Complete data-driven study of existing landlord-tenant regulations to determine what policy changes are needed to promote abundant housing production, which in turn improves housing affordability. Study must include input from housing production investment organizations.

- Implement a moratorium on adding new rental regulation policies until the study is complete.
- Adopt statewide reforms to inclusionary housing that require local jurisdictions to regularly analyze, calibrate, and fully offset the cost of the affordability requirement.
- Advocate to implement a 120-day building permit review deadline for housing projects.
- Request a parking management and regulatory study city-wide to adopt parking best practices that make Portland the best city to park in America.
- Reinstate MULTE (pre-IH) program to make it available for new projects with rents to 120% AMI.
- Advocate for all Metro cities to actively adopt technologies that streamline and improve public accessibility and understanding of zoning and permitting processes.
- Advocate for all public entities to actively move publicly-owned appropriately zoned land into housing production.
- Advocate for Metro to create a region-wide landbank to opportunistically acquire distressed properties and then swiftly move them into housing production.
- Partner with local jurisdictions, universities, and the state to establish a revolving loan fund for off-site housing construction companies.
- Support common sense wetland regulation revisions for Willamette Valley communities to speed up permitting processes and replenish the State’s wetland fund.

Invest in Safe, Livable Communities

Restoring and sustaining public safety and quality of life must be viewed as an essential strategy for Portland’s long-term economic competitiveness.

Every Portlander deserves to live in a community that feels clean, safe and healthy. Restoring that basic promise must be the city’s top priority. We must bring funding for public safety services across all regional government to levels on par with peer cities, while building a system that is transparent, coordinated, and accountable.

Homelessness should be a rare, brief, and non-recurring. To achieve this standard, we must fund an outcomes-driven coordinated system including sobering centers, service navigation, crisis response, and drug deflection programs that help people heal, stabilize, and succeed. This must be partnered with enforcement of unsanctioned camping laws to move people off the streets and into the system of recovery.

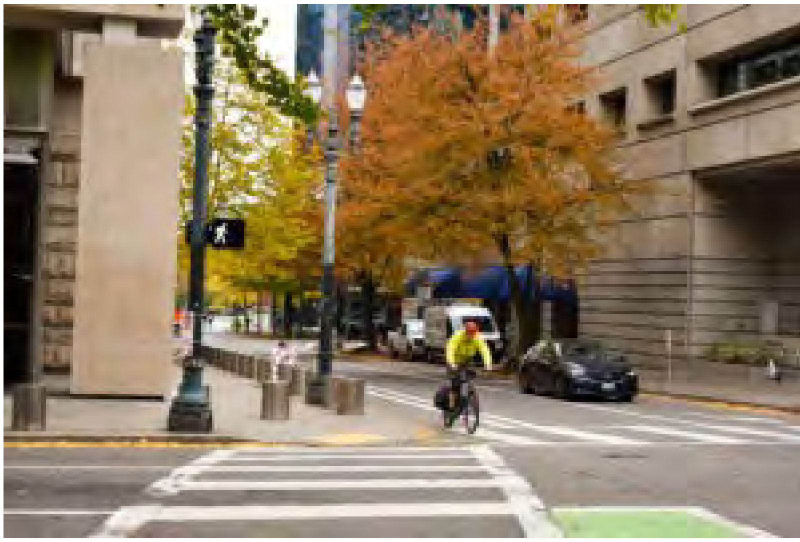
Portland’s arts, culture and entertainment industries, neighborhood storefronts, internationally-recognized restaurants, and world class parks are essential elements to recruit and attract employers, families, visitors, and private investment.

We must advance policies and funding decisions that support these core economic strengths that drive economic vitality and build a thriving community.

Priorities:

- Support Mayor Wilson’s initiative to end unsheltered homelessness in Portland.
- Continue to move forward with planned opening of Multnomah County’s 24/7 sobering center.
- Continue to push for an overhaul of Oregon’s failed mental health and addiction policies and services by supporting expert partners such as Central City Concern and New Avenues for Youth.
- Push for funding of the Portland Police Bureau, Multnomah County District Attorney, jails, courts, and all public safety services to be on par with peer cities. City and County budgets must be balanced without reducing public safety.
- Continue to push and support increased activation of arts, creative sector, and small businesses in our public spaces.
- Support and grow the sports, arts, and entertainment economy through the expansion of private-public partnerships, including redevelopment and enhancement of our facilities and venues.
- Transform the Willamette riverfront and waterfront parks into active, modern, and sustainable economic and cultural drivers.
- Support/advocate for public events within the city through sustainable funding and streamlining the regulations, permitting, and approval process.
- Advocate for safe, equitable, and clean transit options.
- Ensure continued funding for graffiti abatement, especially on main routes in and out of the city, and ODOT infrastructure.
- Bring Oregon into compliance with Supreme Court decisions and neighboring states by repealing or reforming HB 3115 to allow for local enforcement of unsanctioned camping laws.
- Hold city accountable for financial reform to the Parks Bureau and deliver on levy promises.

Prepare for a Healthy Climate Future



We believe climate action and investing in the industries that are leading the clean energy transition can be a rising economic tide that is a core part of Portland’s economic revival. Investments in clean energy, green buildings, workforce training, and sustainable infrastructure can expand economic opportunities while reducing emissions and supporting clean air and water. We must advance climate policies with accountability, collaboration, measurable results, and a clear understanding of the costs and trade-offs. Portland can set a standard for what a thriving, sustainable, economically vibrant, climate forward community looks like.

Priorities:

- The future use of the Portland Clean Energy Fund should prioritize economic development, office-to-housing conversion, employer recruitment, job growth, and resiliency.
- Adopt policy and financing strategies that will support and enhance the Portland Clean Industry Hub’s mission of decarbonizing industrial businesses and igniting the growth of the clean industry sector in the Portland region.
- Monitor Multnomah County’s Climate Plan development to ensure strategies remain balanced, achievable, evidence-based, reasonable in cost, and actionable within their scope. Participate in public forums to advocate on behalf of our members.

- Of critical importance to the regional economy, monitor the Critical Energy Infrastructure Hub developments at the city and state level but push for oversight and rules to come from the state level.
- Continue to monitor Commercial and Multifamily Residential Building Energy Reporting Requirements that would change code requiring reporting of climate and health information to prospective tenants in multifamily buildings.

Oregon's High Road Economic Strategy

Outline

Qs- Does the Council have clear agreement on what constitutes economic prosperity? Is it focused on making life better for Oregonians?

Take the High Road: Quality Over Quantity

1. **Goal: Raise per capita income for all Oregonians — not total GDP or job count**
   1.1 Per capita income is the best single measure of economic success
   1.2 Must be paired with measures of distribution — especially wages at the bottom and middle
2. **Two strategies: High Road vs. Low Road**
   2.1 High road: high skills, high wages, high productivity, high innovation
   2.2. High road: helping businesses be more productive and grow vs. luring them in through tax breaks (support quality education and training, great quality of life, predicable and efficient regulation (without surrendering health, safety and environmental goals)
   2.3 Low road: cut taxes, slash services, compete on cost with Alabama, India, Mexico
   2.4 Low road is a trap — grows the economy temporarily but doesn't improve lives; undermines assets needed for long-run growth

Education: The Single Most Powerful Economic Lever

1. **College attainment explains ~70% of income variation across states**
   1.1 No other factor comes close
   1.2 Nobel economist Philippe Aghion: states that invest in higher education saw significantly faster growth
2. **Oregon's unrealized 40/40/20 vision**
   2.1 Oregon Business Plan (2007): 40% bachelor's degree, 40% associate's degree, 20% high school diploma ("Low-paying jobs will not support families or the Oregon economy…All jobs that pay well increasingly require higher levels of education and work readiness.")
   2.2 Oregon Legislature adopted the 40/40/20 vision as official state policy in 2011 (ORS 350.014)
   2.3 Oregon is falling short, especially for people of color
   2.4 Incomes would be higher today had we achieved this goal
3. **Continuum of education investments**
   3.1 Pre-K/Preschool for All: high returns especially for disadvantaged kids; attracts young families; provides affordability for low- and middle-income families
   3.2 Training/Apprenticeship:
      Expand high school and workplace "earn to learn" programs
      Reskilling and continuous upskilling to embrace AI and other industry shocks
   3.3 Challenges facing the American workforce require a talent strategy that focuses on education and training (Bipartisan Policy Center, "A Nation at Risk to A Nation at Work," 2026)

Tax Incentives: Ineffective, Wasteful, and Self-Serving

1. **The evidence: incentives mostly don't work**
   - 1.1 Upjohn Institute (Bartik): Up to 90% of incentives go to companies that would have located there anyway
   - 1.2 Business Oregon's consultants never evaluated whether tax breaks actually changed firm decisions
   - 1.3 Virginia study of single sales factor: "no evidence that sales factor apportionment stimulates firm job creation"
2. **Incentives reward bad behavior**
   - 2.1 Companies that threaten to leave get rewarded; those that invest and pay taxes get nothing
   - 2.2 Enterprise Zone expansion (3–5 yr → 13 yr) invites gaming: companies postpone decisions to qualify for larger breaks
   - 2.3 Economic developers have no incentive not to give away maximum tax benefits
3. **CEO advice on tax policy is self-serving, not sound**
   - 3.1 Smart CEOs pursue high-value, differentiated strategies — they don't compete on lowest cost
   - 3.2 Oregon cannot out-cheap Alabama, Mississippi, India, or Mexico, and will be poorer if it tries
4. **Business climate rankings are misleading**
   - 4.1 Negatively correlated with wages and quality of life
   - 4.2 They measure how bad conditions are for workers, not how strong the economy is

Workforce Quality Attracts Business — Not the Other Way Around

1. **Business location logic has reversed**
   - 1.1 Companies now go where talented workers are; workforce is the #1 location factor
   - 1.2 Building quality of life draws workers and the innovative firms that want to hire them
   - 1.3 Create Innovation Centers, encourage public-private funding – play to Oregon's strengths
   - 1.4. Foster small and medium sized high-quality businesses in niche markets (Mittelstand)
2. **Business migration is a small factor in state economic growth**
   - 2.1 BLS data: very few firms ever move between states
   - 2.2 Oregon ranks 11th in net inbound business migration (2021 data)
   - 2.3 New firm formation and organic growth — not relocation — drive state economies
3. **Firms chasing subsidies are often weaker firms, and have negative effects**
   - 3.1 Companies that compete purely on cost are vulnerable to displacement by more innovative competitors
   - 3.2 Example: TikTok data center tax breaks offer no spinoffs; consume land, water, and electricity; drive up energy prices

Oregon's High Road Has Worked Before

1. **The 1980s catastrophe and recovery**
   - 1.1 1979–1982: 10% of Oregon jobs disappeared; one of the two hardest-hit states nationally
   - 1.2 Lost much of the timber industry and the state's largest private employer (Tektronix)
   - 1.3 Recovery built on quality of life and innovation — not subsidies

1.4 Oregon outpaced US job growth from 1982–2000; largely avoided the 1990–91 recession

2. **Quality of life is a talent magnet**
   - 2.1 "Things look different here" — Wieden+Kennedy slogan of the mid-1990s
   - 2.2 1990–2000: college-educated 25- to 34-year-olds grew five times faster in Portland than in other large metros
   - 2.3 Tom McCall: Oregon should be "demure and lovely" — not a hungry hussy throwing itself at every "stinking smokestack"

Oregon's Wage Record: High Road Policies Deliver

1. **Minimum wage leadership**
   - 1.1 Since 2005, Oregon has had among the highest minimum wages in the US
   - 1.2 Research shows minimum wages raise earnings without reducing aggregate employment; also drive up worker productivity
2. **Since 2008, Oregon wages have outpaced the US for low- and middle-income workers**
   - 2.1 10th percentile wages: Oregon +37% vs. US +29% (inflation-adjusted)
   - 2.2 Median wages: Oregon +24% vs. US +16% (inflation-adjusted)

Recommendations: Follow Through on the High Road

1. **Set the right goal: per capita income growth, not GDP or job counts;**

   make wages for low- and middle-income workers an explicit target
2. **Fully implement the 40/40/20 vision already adopted into law**
3. **Invest in education at every level (Pre-K through HEd and ongoing upskilling)**
4. **Build quality of life to attract and retain talented workers (affordable housing, healthcare, childcare, public transportation)**
5. **Resist expanding tax incentive programs without rigorous evaluation that they benefit Oregon taxpayers and are worth the trade-off of other budget priorities**
6. **Focus on distinctive Oregon strengths (Porter's advice from 2007 Oregon Business Plan); include small- and medium-sized businesses**
7. **Develop an AI strategy that augments worker productivity rather than replaces workers; promotes programs that provide ongoing AI upskilling**

3.11.2026.1

OREGON BUSINESS COUNCIL

A Moment of Economic Reckoning for Oregon

A Letter to the Governor's Prosperity Council

Oregon is entering a different economic era.

Economists do not formally declare recessions at the state or metropolitan level. But respected national and local observers have described current conditions in Oregon and Portland as "recession-like." Job growth trails the nation. Population growth has stalled. Business investment is increasingly uncertain. Public institutions—from universities to local governments—are facing fiscal stress.

These cyclical pressures would be serious enough on their own. But they are unfolding alongside something more profound. For the first time in modern history, Oregon is entering an era of population scarcity. Natural population growth has turned negative. Domestic in-migration has slowed. Talent is more mobile than at any point in history, and states are competing fiercely for people, ideas, and capital.

For decades, Oregon's central economic question was how to manage growth. Today the question is whether we can generate it at all. As the Oregon's Choice framework argued, unmanaged expansion is no longer the primary threat. Stagnation is. Sustained prosperity depends on modest population growth, rising productivity, and a competitive value proposition for households and employers.

This shift requires a corresponding shift in policy ambition.

A First Test — and a Warning Signal

The recently completed short legislative session offered an early indication of how the state is responding to this new reality.

Lawmakers came together around targeted initiatives, including the proposed renovation of the Moda Center to help retain the Portland Trail Blazers. That effort reflects an understanding that civic confidence and economic vitality are closely linked.

At the same time, measures aimed more directly at strengthening Oregon's long-term competitive position fell short. Proposals to expand industrial land supply and reinforce research and development incentives did not advance. Funding for industrial site readiness was reduced significantly from the Governor's original proposal. These outcomes suggest that business leaders and elected officials are not yet aligned on the scale of the challenge confronting the state.

The lesson is not that policymakers lack commitment. It is that the problem statement itself remains contested.

Beyond Conventional Economic Development

Many observers have concluded that Oregon simply needs to "do more economic development." That instinct is understandable but incomplete.

Traditional economic development tools — marketing, retention, recruitment, and targeted incentives — remain important. But they cannot substitute for the broader task now before state leadership: restoring Oregon's overall appeal.

Today, key elements of that appeal are under strain. Housing costs remain among the highest relative to income in the nation, and despite sustained policy attention, production outcomes have not improved materially. Public school performance ranks near the bottom nationally. The tax system is volatile and increasingly misaligned with an economy shaped by mobile talent and digital work. Land use and regulatory frameworks designed for a different era now constrain both housing supply and industrial expansion. Climate-related risks, particularly wildfire and smoke, threaten one of Oregon's enduring comparative advantages — quality of place.

Taken together, these pressures create the conditions for what some analysts describe as a depressed cycle of stagnation: declining population growth, fiscal stress, reduced investment, and weakened public confidence. Early signs are visible across the state — school closures, university budget reductions, rising local levies to sustain basic services, and growing infrastructure backlogs.

Missed Opportunities

Oregon's recent economic performance increasingly reflects opportunities foregone. Major traded-sector investments that could anchor long-term job and income growth have been lost, delayed, or redirected because of the state's cost structure, regulatory complexity, infrastructure constraints, and limited supply of development-ready industrial land.

In May 2024, Greater Portland Inc. reported that the region had lost six clean-technology and advanced manufacturing prospects with a combined estimated capital investment of approximately $5.6 billion. Several cited the lack of large, shovel-ready sites as a decisive factor in choosing other locations. These were the kinds of projects capable of generating thousands of jobs, strengthening supply chains, and expanding the long-term tax base.

Other recent decisions reinforce the pattern. Daimler Truck ultimately located a planned U.S. battery-cell manufacturing facility in Mississippi rather than the Portland region, citing speed-to-market and site readiness considerations. Recruitment materials prepared by regional partners document additional prospects that bypassed Oregon after concluding that infrastructure timelines, permitting certainty, and land availability were more favorable in competing states.

Access to large-scale electrical loads has emerged as another recurring constraint. Limitations in generation, transmission capacity, and siting timelines increasingly hinder the state's ability to compete for energy-intensive industrial investment.

These missed opportunities translate directly into fewer high-wage jobs, reduced capital formation, and a weaker long-term fiscal base. At the same time, some existing traded-sector employers face regulatory burdens that threaten the viability of legacy operations. The cumulative effect is a business climate in which potential Oregon wins too often become growth somewhere else.

The Charge to the Council

Against this backdrop, the Governor's Prosperity Council has a clear and urgent responsibility.

Its task is not simply to assemble another list of policy ideas. It is to produce a coherent set of recommendations — bold enough and credible enough to signal to Oregonians, to national investors, and to the broader public that the state understands the stakes and is prepared to act.

Oregon's strengths remain formidable: natural assets, innovative industries, entrepreneurial communities, and a tradition of long-term planning. But strengths alone are not a strategy. They must be matched with institutional reform and renewed policy clarity.

The Council's work should therefore focus on five interrelated systems that most directly shape the state's competitive position.

Five Structural Priorities for Oregon's Economic Renewal

Oregon's economic challenges are structural, not cyclical. Restoring competitiveness requires sustained action across a small set of core systems that shape growth, investment decisions, and the state's overall appeal.

1. **Institutionalize a Durable Growth Strategy and Governance Model**. Oregon needs an enduring statewide framework to align economic priorities across government, business, education, and regional partners. A successor Prosperity Council, supported by a small public-private backbone organization, should coordinate sector strategies, strengthen

business retention and recruitment, and sustain long-term focus on traded-sector growth.

2. **Sharpen the Land Use Problem Statement and Organize Reform Options**. Oregon's land use system remains a foundational strength but now constrains housing production, industrial site readiness, and clean energy deployment. The Council should clarify the scale of these constraints and organize leading reform options — including UGB modernization, improved inventory standards, accelerated permitting, and scalable infrastructure financing — to enable legislative action in 2027.
3. **Restore Tax Competitiveness and Revenue Sustainability**. The current tax structure is increasingly misaligned with a mobile workforce and competitive national economy. Reliance on personal income taxes, pyramiding effects from the Corporate Activity Tax, and high marginal local rates in Portland are weakening Oregon's value proposition. Reform should improve competitiveness, stability, and long-term revenue durability while supporting traded-sector growth.
4. **Execute Regulatory Modernization**. The cumulative expansion of Oregon's regulatory code has increased delay, uncertainty, and compliance costs. A disciplined regulatory budgeting framework — with measurable reduction targets, more consistent rulemaking practices, and independent economic impact review — can restore predictability while maintaining essential protections.
5. **Strengthen Talent Development and Improve Education Performance**. Stronger talent pipelines and improved education outcomes are central to long-term growth. Oregon should build on emerging sector-based workforce consortia, better align education and training with industry demand, and implement a clearer statewide assessment and accountability framework to improve K–12 performance and workforce readiness.

A Signal Moment

Periods of structural change often create moments of unusual clarity. This is one of them.

If Oregon responds incrementally, the state risks drifting into a prolonged period of modest growth, fiscal constraint, and diminished national relevance. If it responds decisively, it can renew its economic model for a slower growing, more competitive nation.

The work of the Prosperity Council should aim unmistakably at the latter outcome. Its recommendations should help restore confidence in Oregon's future — and reaffirm that the state remains a place where people and businesses can thrive.

portland seedfund

March 19, 2026

Governor Tina Kotek
State of Oregon

Dear Governor and Staff,

Portland Seed Fund is writing to urge a **line-item veto of the SB 1507 provision regarding disconnecting QSBS from the Federal tax code.** It is poorly researched, irresponsibly drafted, and unfair tax policy. While failing to generate substantial future revenue, it sends an immediate signal that Oregon is the least entrepreneur-friendly state, a message we can ill-afford in this challenging economic climate and the exact opposite of your stated goal December 3, 2025 when you announced your Prosperity Roadmap.

We find ourselves perplexed and beyond disappointed as to why lawmakers would decouple the QSBS exemption - easily the most potent incentive for entrepreneurs and their investors to build growth companies – without involvement by Portland Seed Fund or two other major stakeholders, Oregon Venture Fund and the State's own venture capital expert, the Oregon Growth Board. It is our belief that "the train had left the station" before anyone with standing in the industry was aware of this and able to get the word out to the thousands of high-growth entrepreneurs we touch.

Portland Seed Fund (with its sister Intrepid Oregon Fund) is the most active venture capital investor in Oregon (Source: CB Insights). As a small, home-grown fund investing in 225+ home-grown startups since 2010, our portfolio companies have **returned $150 per dollar invested by the State within 5 years** (Source: ECO Northwest), making it one of Oregon's highest performing economic development tools on an ROI basis. The State of Oregon is a Limited Partner (LP) in all Portland Seed Funds, alongside ~200 private investors, who literally constitute the "private" in public-private partnerships. This fails to capture the hundreds of millions of dollars raised by our portfolio companies almost exclusively from private investors, fueling high-velocity high-wage job growth in Oregon.

SB 1507 drafters failed to understand the mechanics of the Federal QSBS law as written, the current state of the private capital markets and the mechanics of venture capital in Oregon. **The QSBS provision greatly over-estimates the revenue that would be generated in current and future biennia**. The vast majority of venture capital deployed in Oregon comes from California and other states, whose investors will not be subject to this tax (but are included in the forecast). Most Oregon based-investors are individual angels who write checks in the $25k-$250K range, where the multiple millions come almost exclusively from out of state.

By our calculations, when out-of-state venture capital is subtracted, **the QSBS provision is funded on the backs of fewer than 1,000 Oregonians.** Not only will the actual v. forecasted dollars fall far short, this seems to us to be unfair and unsound tax policy with tremendous future risk.

Even as the forecast won't deliver the revenue projected, **Oregon entrepreneurs and investors are now incentivized to leave the State.** The magic formula of resident entrepreneurs competing successfully to win hundreds of millions of out-of-state investment to deploy in Oregon will cease. Keeping the QSBS provision as written is tantamount to slaying the geese that lay the golden eggs for Oregon - at a time when other States are wooing entrepreneurs away with incentives and, frankly, a cursory knowledge of and respect for the role they play in the State's capital stack and prosperity.

We want to help make this right. **Portland Seed Fund and the 43 portfolio company signatories below will make ourselves available to your team, lawmakers and Prosperity Council members** to better understand the importance of QSBS and the flawed assumptions that went into the provision's hastened passage. Please contact us.

Sincerely,

Portland Seed Fund General Partner/Managing Directors

Angela Jackson, Jenn Lynch, Steve Eichenlaub, Jim Huston

Contact information:

Angela Jackson / angela@portlandseedfund.com / 503-319-5875 (cell)
Jenn Lynch / jenn@portlandseedfund.com / 503-419-3007

Portland Seed Fund and Intrepid Oregon portfolio company signatories:

gearUP Sports
Hydrolix
Op Connect
Hemex Health
ChEmpower Corporation
Photon Marine
Bold Reuse
Caravel Bio, Inc.
Digs
Solid Carbon, Inc.
Brandlive
Lumen Learning
Range Revolution
CleanHaus
Surgivance
Handful
Verify Ventures
Zing Drone Solutions
Tripgrid Inc.
Radious
Trova Trip
Poached Jobs

Indow
Neurosom
Tonsil Tech
Community Energy Labs
Synplexity
Mebot AI
Transformative Optics Corporation
Archer RE Inc.
HILOS Inc.
Toolbelt Inc.
Rapta, Inc.
N4EA
Kapha Bio
Steamchain

Former PSF founders who have exited companies
Rita Hansen (Founder/former CEO, Onboard Dynamics)
Allie Magyar (Founder/former CEO, Hubb)
Peter Kirwan (Founder/former CEO, Collexion, new co CEO MeBot)
Ben McKinley (Founder Brandlive, now Cascade Web Development)

PSF companies outside Oregon/Washington
Backpack Healthcare
Cartogram
TiLT

March 19, 2026

The Honorable Tina Kotek
Governor of Oregon
254 State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: The Math on SB 1507 and the Elimination of Oregon's QSBS Exclusion

Dear Governor Kotek,

We understand you are currently evaluating SB 1507, which would decouple Oregon from the federal tax system in several critical ways. In particular, we write to share our perspective on the provision to eliminate the Qualified Small Business Stock exclusion (referred to throughout this letter as "QSBS").

We recognize that the state is facing a serious financial situation and a challenging economic environment, requiring difficult tradeoffs to balance both revenue and investments in important services such as housing, education, and economic equity.

We love Oregon and want to see it thrive, and we want to improve the long-term fiscal health of the state to ensure that we can deliver the services that we value for all Oregonians. This level of investment requires a stable and growing tax base. We fear that SB 1507, and specifically the elimination of the QSBS exclusion, will do the opposite. The Legislative Revenue Office ("LRO") projects just $19.45 million in new annual revenue from taxes on those Oregonians who qualify for QSBS this year and will no longer be able to exclude those taxes in Oregon. It does not include the impact of any additional city, county or metro taxes (potentially 13.9% combined at the marginal rate) and the behavioral impact on taxpayers. We believe that calculation and its methodology are incorrect, and that Oregon will lose far more revenue than it gains, and fast.

Ganesh Shankar built Responsive in Beaverton. Steve Marsh built Smarsh at the Pittock Block Building next to the food cart pods in downtown Portland. Jessica Gomez bootstrapped Rogue Valley Microdevices in Medford from credit card debt into a world-class semiconductor foundry, becoming the first woman and minority-owned business to receive CHIPS Act funding. All three hired Oregonians, paid Oregon taxes, and grew companies that became pillars of this state's technology ecosystem. All three are now gone.

Ganesh to Texas. Steve and Jessica to Florida. Jessica is now building her next manufacturing facility in Palm Bay. The jobs, the taxes, and the economic lift of that expansion belong to other states now, not Oregon. They did not leave because they stopped believing in what they were building. They left because other states offered them something Oregon could not: a supportive business climate.

They are not outliers. They are the beginning of a pattern that, without intervention, becomes an exodus. We are aware of others at similar stages having the same conversation with their advisors right now, today, as this bill waits for your signature. Each one who leaves makes it easier for the next one to justify exploring what a move might look like for their family and their employees.

The business community has been listening carefully and with optimism to your recent statements about improving the business climate in Oregon and the creation and commitment to The Prosperity Council. But SB 1507 sends exactly the opposite message. According to several prominent attorneys in Portland, the volume of calls from founders, investors, and executives to discuss a move should SB 1507 pass has increased sharply in just the last two weeks. People are not waiting to see what happens. They are already making plans.

When they go, they will not just take a one-time capital gains event with them. Every entrepreneur who leaves takes future job creation with them, including years of payroll taxes, corporate taxes, and the entire economic ecosystem that grows around a thriving business. Every company that moves employees takes their spending (sales tax), housing budget (property tax), and charitable giving with them. We risk that the next great company they build will be built somewhere else. The employees they hire to write that story will live somewhere else.

As we'll show below, the SB 1507 math doesn't pencil. The outflows will dwarf the $19.45 million of tax gain the LRO projects in the first year, and the gap will widen every year thereafter. It won't balance the budget; it will dig a deeper hole.

The history of QSBS is a story about how to grow an economy from the ground up. President Clinton created it in 1993 to spur innovation and economic growth in a moment of economic uncertainty. President Obama expanded it significantly in 2010 on the heels of the financial crisis. Both Presidents recognized the same thing: that new businesses are the engine of growth, they require capital and risk-taking to get off the ground, and the revenue they eventually generate in payroll, property, and corporate taxes far outweighs the capital gains waived along the way. This was a bet on compounding returns (a growing pool helps fund more of the things we care about), and it paid off. We can do the same here in Oregon, in a moment that calls for leadership to spur action.

What the Numbers Actually Say

The LRO projects $19.45 million in new annual revenue, or $38.9 million in this biennium. We don't dispute their math. We dispute their assumptions on what's factored into the calculation. In speaking with the LRO, we learned that their economists reviewed tax return data from Oregon taxpayers and estimated only those who qualified for QSBS each year, but now will not.

The LRO's own economist confirmed that only about 500 Oregon taxpayers claim the QSBS exclusion in a given year, with roughly 80% of the total exclusion amount concentrated among the top 50 claimants. Oregon is proposing to raise $19.45 million annually by changing the tax treatment for fewer than 500 people, with most of the tax revenue coming from 50. They are the investors who fund Oregon's startups and the founders who build them. Losing even a fraction of them to Washington, Nevada, or simply to the decision never to come here in the first place, wipes out the projected gain entirely. And unlike a capital gains event, that loss compounds every year they are gone.

The LRO model only captures people who are already here and treats them as stationary. The four analyses below model what happens when they aren't.

1. **Decreased Company Relocations and Increased Company Departures**

   Making Oregon an attractive place to build and relocate a company is arguably more important than ever before. The Tax Foundation's 2026 Index shows Oregon has fallen further in tax competitiveness than any other state since 2020, now ranking 49th for corporate tax structure. And last year, CNBC ranked Oregon 39th in the nation for business, down from the top 20 less than a decade ago. New Jersey was one of the last remaining states that did not conform to federal QSBS rules, leaving its founders and investors at a structural disadvantage. The competitiveness of the state to attract talent was important to that administration. On June 30, 2025, after years of watching capital flow to QSBS-friendly states, New Jersey's governor signed legislation bringing the state into full conformity, effective 2026.

   At the exact moment New Jersey is joining the federal QSBS framework because the evidence demanded it, Oregon is considering leaving it. Oregon would be the only state in the Pacific Northwest (and one of only a handful nationally) to actively tax QSBS gains that the federal government and nearly all states have chosen to exempt. Oregon's access to capital and network effects is already limited. This bill widens that gap.

   Additionally, the risk that an Oregon-based company decides to relocate to another state increases significantly if this bill is passed. Even 1-3 companies leaving is material. We estimate that each departing Oregon company in the 400–600 employee range costs the state approximately $15 million in direct annual tax revenue (payroll, corporate, and personal income taxes), excluding secondary effects on vendors, landlords, and local services. Each company departure adds permanently to the annual loss. By year five, the conservative scenario of one departure per year results in $75M of tax revenue losses per year — every year — with no path to recovery.

Scenario	Companies Departing (Yrs 1–5)	Avg Annual Revenue Loss	Cumulative 5-Year Loss
Low Case	1 per year	~$15M	~$225M
Mid Case	3 per year	~$45M	~$675M
High Case	5 per year	~$75M	~$1.125B

2. **New Company Formation Loss**

Nationally, venture capital firms are 74% more likely to invest in early-stage startups when the QSBS exclusion is available. In addition, since its expansion by President Obama, sectors eligible for QSBS have seen significantly higher rates of new business starts and overall employment growth than ineligible sectors. In speaking with many local investors and venture firms, many of their limited partners ("LPs") invest in their funds because of the QSBS benefits and many have said that they would be less likely to invest if they no longer existed. This is not a hypothetical risk. Oregon VC funding has already collapsed from $2.8 billion in 2021 to approximately $586 million in 2024, dramatically outpacing the national slowdown.

We modeled a representative Oregon early-stage startup as employing approximately 50 people at an average salary of $85,000, generating approximately $500,000 in annual Oregon income tax revenue — based on Oregon's 8.75% marginal rate applied across the employee base. This figure is deliberately conservative. It excludes employees earning above $250,000 who tip into Oregon's 9.9% top bracket, excludes founder income entirely, and excludes any corporate taxes the startup pays as it scales.

Oregon attracts less than 1% of West Coast venture funding and SB 1507 would put Oregon entrepreneurs at an even bigger disadvantage when trying to raise capital. This bill accelerates a deterioration that is already well underway and gives investors another reason to invest elsewhere.

Scenario	Fewer Startups Founded Per Year	Revenue Lost Per Startup	Annual Tax Revenue Loss

Low Case	5	~$500K	~$2.5M
Mid Case	10	~$500K	~$5M
High Case	20	~$500K	~$10M

3. **Investor Exits**

Multiple Oregon fund managers, including Oregon Venture Fund, confirmed that their LPs invest specifically because of QSBS benefits and may not invest without them. States like Nevada, Texas, Tennessee, and Florida all offer the full federal QSBS exclusion with no state income tax and Washington continues to recognize QSBS despite recent changes to its tax code.

When investors leave, they stop investing in these funds and take their other tax revenue with them. We estimated annual state income tax contribution per qualified investor at approximately $300,000, consistent with income profiles typical of active angel investors and venture LPs.

Scenario	Investors Exiting Per Year	Revenue Lost Per Investor	Annual Tax Revenue Loss
Low Case	5	~$300K	~$1.5M
Mid Case	10	~$300K	~$3M
High Case	20	~$300K	~$6M

4. **CEO & Founder Moves**

QSBS treatment is determined by where the founder is domiciled. What Oregon loses when a founder moves is everything else they bring with them, including their salary, their investment income, their real estate investments, and their spouse's income. These are high-earning individuals with substantial tax profiles well beyond any single liquidity event. They are also highly mobile in an age where you can increasingly work from anywhere.

When these founders leave, Oregon loses more than their tax contribution. It loses the investors who write the first checks into the next generation of startups, the mentors who take the calls, the board members who have been through it before. That informal network, built over decades, is what turns a good idea into a company. It cannot be rebuilt quickly, and it cannot be replaced by policy.

We estimate each departing founder represents approximately $1 million in annual non-QSBS taxable income, generating roughly $99,000 in annual Oregon income tax at the state's effective rate on high earners. That loss is permanent, recurring, and begins the day they change their address, not the day they sell their company.

Scenario	Relocating Per Year	Other Taxable Income	Annual Tax Revenue Loss	5-Year Cum
Low Case	5	~$1M	~$500k	~$2.5M
Mid Case	10	~$1M	~1M	~$5M
High Case	20	~$1M	~2M	~$10M

In our analysis, SB 1507 is a net loser. Even under conservative assumptions, Oregon loses far more tax revenue each year than the $19.45 million LRO projects it would gain.

The cumulative five-year picture (accounting for the permanent, compounding nature of the above scenarios) runs into the hundreds of millions or more. The LRO's math doesn't factor in the downstream tax impact of companies that might leave, companies that will never be founded here, founders who may take residency advice from their lawyers or advisors, and investors who might choose other states over Oregon.

Oregonians believe in the power of government to positively impact people's lives. SB 1507 will shrink the resources available to do that, and the hole it leaves will deepen every year.

A Better Way Forward

The timing could not be worse. We are at the beginning of an AI-driven economy that will create the next generation of great companies faster than any prior era. Oregon's long-standing values of creativity, entrepreneurship, and integrity are perfectly-suited to leading the way, and the window to seed those companies, attract that capital, and build that ecosystem is open right now. It will not stay open.

Matt Price co-founded Crescendo in Portland in 2024. The company combines AI with human customer service operations and has raised $50 million, one of the largest fundraises by an Oregon-founded company in the last two years. Matt lives in Portland, believes in what this community stands for, and wants to build here.

But Crescendo is headquartered in San Francisco, where the AI talent density made it necessary. And in the last year alone, Crescendo hired over 500 people in other U.S. states rather than in California. This could have been here. These are not executive roles. They are the working people jobs that Oregon's economy needs most, the kind that stabilize neighborhoods, fill schools, and keep local businesses alive. At an average salary of $60,000, that is $30 million in annual payroll that did not land here. The reason is not indifference. Oregon's employer payroll taxes and Portland-area taxes make hiring materially more expensive than states like Texas. The potential elimination of QSBS adds another weight to the scale.

States that recruit and welcome founders as economic builders will get them. States that signal they see them only as sources of revenue will not. Oregon is on the edge of sending exactly the wrong signal at exactly the wrong moment, to the people building the companies of tomorrow. Matt would like to pull the company toward Oregon. The state keeps pushing him the other way.

A state as dependent on income taxes as Oregon (representing 80+% of the general fund) has three levers for revenue growth: more taxpayers, higher incomes, or higher rates. This bill pulls the third lever while actively working against the first two. That is not a budget solution. It is a bet that the people won't notice, or won't leave. Anecdotal evidence and the data in this letter say otherwise.

You created the Prosperity Council to build the next decade of economic growth in Oregon. While we understand the fiscal pressures driving this bill, we respect the difficulty of the choices before you and are not asking you to ignore the budget imbalance. But signing this bill makes that work harder before it starts and creates a deeper hole once the correct math is applied.

We urge you to veto the bill and task the Legislature with fixing it in a special session. If that's not politically possible, we are asking for something specific and achievable before the bill is signed: a clear, public commitment in a signing letter that makes concerns clear and sets the expectation for the Legislature to restore the QSBS exclusion at a special session this year.

That commitment costs nothing today. It tells Oregon's entrepreneurs, founders, investors, and scaling companies that this is a bridge, not a verdict. It gives the business community a reason to stay the course rather than start making calls to their attorneys, accountants, and real estate agents. And it gives the Legislature the runway to get this right before the damage becomes permanent.

Your commitment to fixing this is the clearest possible proof that this administration means it. We urge you to make that commitment now, and to send an unambiguous message to every founder, investor, and scaling company in this state that Oregon is a place where building something great is still worth the risk.

Sincerely,

[Signature page to follow]

Nathan Christensen
Mineral & Huckleberry

Sam Kolbert-Hyle
Brandlive

Marcelino Alvarez
Photon Marine

Diane Fraiman
Voyager Capital

Stephen D. Marsh
Smarsh

Ross Gray
Cloud Campaign

Thomas Iwasaki
Vitality Blueprint

Eric Winquist
Jama Software

Matt Price
Crescendo

Irving Levin
Genesis Financial

Colin Nederkoorn
Customer.io

Skip Newberry
TAO

Eric Rosenfeld
Oregon Venture Fund

Marty Kagan
Hydrolix

Ganesh Shankar
Responsive

Eric Breon
Vacasa & Fairly

Ryan Comingdeer
Platformr

Mac Lavier
gearUP Sports

Justin Vandehey
Thread

Jessica Gomez
Rogue Valley Micro

Kim Thanost
Lumen Learning

Teresa Coats
LearnAIR

John Horton
LegitScript

Stephanie Weber
Ruby & SheerID

Kate Johnson
Act On!

** Signatures as of 11:00am on March 19, 2026. Additional names will be added as they arrive.*

EnergyTrust of Oregon

920 SW 6th Ave, Suite 900
Portland, OR 97204

1.866.368.7878
energytrust.org

To: Prosperity Council
From: Chris Lyons, Energy Trust of Oregon
Date: March 25, 2026
Re: Prosperity Council Survey

The following provides Energy Trust of Oregon's responses to Governor Kotek's Prosperity Council online survey that closed on Friday, March 20, 2026 and was originally accessed at https://www.research.net/survey-closed/?sm=6aN6_2FiXUT7Tt7B2unhuq12HZuc_2FGvNy_2Fu8L2SIQpGBc7xZUc_2BXv_2Bm2kR_2F05qQuSdUUgF6t7VpqEzYcFFwxiq8BE3PtFhb_2BAIwajr_2BdrDaD7j0EYN18AW53_2BqEXrHXLIwo9LJR0IMod7b8zjceqT6McDdN2pSibww7qnsUcBHhQU_3D. We regret that we missed the deadline and hope our feedback can be shared with and help inform the council's efforts to develop actionable steps to accelerate Oregon's economy, create good paying jobs, and recruit and grow Oregon's businesses. If you have any additional questions, please contact Chris Lyons, Sr. Government and Stakeholder Relations Manager, at 971-990-8008 or chris.lyons@energytrust.org.

Name (first and last)
Chris Lyons

Email address
chris.lyons@energytrust.org

*** What is your 5-digit zipcode?**
97204

Are you representing yourself or your organization/business?
Myself
Organization/Business
Both

Business/Organization Information
To better understand whose input we are receiving, please tell us more about your business or organization.

What business/organization are you representing?
Energy Trust of Oregon

Are you in the public or private sector?
Public
Private
Non-profit

What industry do you work in?
Metals and Machinery
Business and Professional Services

Food and Beverage
Forestry and Wood Products
Technology
Outdoor Gear and Apparel
Bioscience
Other (please specify)

- All industry types operating in Oregon and that are customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural, Cascade Natural Gas and Avista

What is your Oregon-based team's headcount?
1 - 20 people
21-100 people
101-500 people
500-1000 people
1000+ people
I don't know

Detailed Input on Focus Areas of Your Choosing
Please share specific challenges, needs, or solutions related to a specific focus area. You may submit as many ideas as you'd like.

Focus area you are providing input on
Business climate
Workforce
Tools for growth

What challenge would you like addressed in the Prosperity Council's recommendations? What is the biggest barrier or friction point in this area?
Energy Trust of Oregon is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people, businesses and communities thrive through clean, affordable energy. We offer information, technical studies, services and cash incentives to help more than 2.4 million customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural, Cascade Natural Gas and Avista in Oregon and Southwest Washington benefit from energy efficiency and renewable energy generation. This includes homeowners, renters, property owners and small to large businesses of all types, like commercial businesses, agricultural producers and manufacturers. We connect these customers to qualified contractors, and we provide these contractors with ongoing training and support.

The State of Oregon has set ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals for utilities by 2030 and beyond. To help utilities meet these goals as affordably as possible, Energy Trust has increased our own targets to significantly scale up cost-effective energy efficiency and small-scale renewable energy efforts, which will result in cost savings, improved comfort for residents and enhanced productivity for businesses.

As outlined in the Oregon Energy Strategy issued in November 2025 and embedded in Energy Trust's long-term planning, the energy industry workforce will need to evolve as the energy sector modernizes to meet Oregon's future energy needs and policy objectives. Investing in workforce development is critical to building a robust pipeline of qualified trades contractors, home energy auditors, designers, architects, engineers and other professionals who are equipped to design and implement clean energy solutions as the demand for energy upgrades increases.

However, there is an ongoing labor shortage of workers with the skills needed for energy efficiency and renewable energy work. A jobs analysis conducted for the Oregon Energy Strategy demonstrated a need for greater employment in several key occupations, including electricians and HVAC specialists. Expanding the number of qualified professionals who can complete projects is vital to accelerating energy savings and advancing Oregon's decarbonization goals. Investing in these sectors, job types and workers can further the state's economic prosperity goals, too.

Energy Trust has identified several challenges related to workforce development for energy efficiency and renewable energy work that we highlight for the Prosperity Council as it develops its recommendations for Governor Kotek. Overall, an ongoing need is state-led and statewide coordination among organizations, agencies and funders like Energy Trust that are focused on clean energy workforce development. There are several entities engaged in clean energy workforce development and supporting the implementation of statewide policies. Without a coordinated strategy and funding, it is challenging for these groups to partner with one another or tap into existing workforce infrastructure such as pre-apprenticeship programs, workforce development boards, funding mechanisms, small business administrations and local organizations. This makes it challenging to scale robust, impactful programs in all regions of the state. An example of a statewide effort seeking to bridge gaps and avoid duplication of efforts is the Oregon Clean Energy Workforce Coalition (OCEWC). The OCEWC is a nonprofit created by Portland General Electric in partnership with several organizations. Energy Trust is actively engaged with OCEWC to ensure we advance shared goals for statewide support for its clean energy workforce.

Other notable challenges are related to training and retention for the clean energy workforce. Bottlenecks around apprenticeship programs limit workforce development, as too few programs exist and the requirement that there is one journeyman for every apprentice (in carpentry and HVAC, in particular) slows the production of qualified workers and limits Energy Trust's ability to complete projects, save energy and generate clean power. In addition, there is an opportunity for pre-apprenticeship programs to more consistently connect graduates with employment opportunities. Workforce instability can also result from challenges retaining workers within the clean energy industry. In some regions, wages in the energy efficiency industry are less competitive, causing job seekers to choose to work outside of the industry.

These challenges are amplified in rural areas of Oregon. In some parts of the state, there is a lack of specialized workers, such as electricians and weatherization installers. This limits the implementation of cost-effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, as contractors must be brought in from outside of local communities, resulting in higher costs for travel, lodging and other logistical expenses and diverting funds outside of rural areas. There is also limited access to training and education programs in rural communities, including a lack of training providers, spaces for hands-on learning and training materials, making it difficult to build a local pipeline of qualified energy professionals.

What solution or specific change would you make?

Energy Trust suggests developing a statewide strategy for clean energy workforce development. This strategy could be state-developed and state-supported, providing uniform direction and shared goals to all key entities involved in clean energy workforce development: government agencies, local organizations, educational partners and funders.

As a part of this strategy, consistent, long-term funding to support community college apprenticeship and training programs, especially in rural areas, can make the training more accessible and sustainable. Training and education in energy efficiency equipment and solar technologies could be embedded within these programs to prepare the workforce for evolving needs in the energy efficiency industry. Consistent funding could help develop and scale training infrastructure in rural communities, including the permanent placement of training equipment and materials. The state could also support business incubation programming to help new small businesses provide energy efficiency and renewable energy services and grow to meet project demand.

What would success look like in 2–3 years?

In two to three years, success would look like establishment and active implementation of a state-led clean energy workforce development strategy, as outlined above. Training programs incorporating education in energy efficiency and solar would be well-funded and established across the state, including in rural communities, enabling a steady pipeline of skilled workers. Additionally, apprenticeship and training programs would partner with local businesses to ensure that, upon completion, workers are connected with employment opportunities within their communities.

Who has to act for this to happen? (i.e. legislature, local governments, employers, education/training partners, etc.)

To develop and implement a state-led clean energy workforce development strategy, there would need to be continued commitment by the state to meet energy goals as outlined in the Oregon Energy Strategy. Additionally, the Legislature would need to act to secure sustainable, long-term funding for clean energy workforce development, with a particular focus on supporting training programs integrating energy efficiency best practices and solar technology training into curricula. Applicable state agencies would need to coordinate with nonprofit and community-based organizations, utilities, community colleges and other partners to develop and implement a statewide clean energy workforce development strategy. Employers would need to partner with training providers and educational institutions to offer hands-on learning opportunities and commit to hiring program graduates.

What existing state programs and policies does Oregon have that are most helpful to you that you want to see continue?

What promising models or effective best practices have you seen in other states that you'd like Oregon to emulate?

New York's comprehensive, accessible website demonstrates how an integrated state system can guide and connect the many players in the energy efficiency landscape, making it easier for businesses, training partners and workers to collaborate.

* Do you have another focus area you would like to provide input on?

Yes
No

Additional Input

Energy Trust's support for energy efficiency and renewable energy has economic benefits of saving people and businesses money, investing in local communities, creating jobs and increasing business income.

Energy efficiency is among the lowest-cost energy resources available to utilities to meet their customers' energy needs, costing less than what utilities would pay for most other sources. When customers save energy, utilities are able to defer spending on new infrastructure, including energy generation, transmission and distribution. These deferred costs help keep rates lower than they otherwise would be and become savings that are passed on to all utility customers, including businesses. For every $1 Energy Trust has invested in energy efficiency, utility customers have saved nearly $2.72.

Since 2002, participating customers have also saved $8.5 billion on energy bills from building retrofits, operations and maintenance improvements, high-performance new construction and renewable energy systems. These savings recirculate in Oregon's economy, driving broader economic benefits for all. Dollars saved on energy bills deliver far-reaching benefits to the economy through new purchases of goods and services, job creation, increased wages and new business income.

Since 2002, the net economic benefits of Energy Trust's expenditures, energy savings and renewable energy generation added $12.7 billion to Oregon's economy, including $4.3 billion in wages, $699 million in small business income and employment equivalent to 93,600 full-time jobs. (Figures are based on an independent analysis by Pinnacle Economics.)

Energy Trust's network of more than 1,600 trade ally contractors and 145 allied businesses located in Oregon and Washington – including local electricians, construction workers, engineers, architects and others – report employing about 17,500 people related to our work in the marketplace. Businesses range in size from one to 200 employees or more; the majority are small businesses with 20 employees or fewer.

For local businesses, energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions not only control costs, but also help meet growing sustainability and corporate responsibility commitments. Energy Trust features many examples on our website, from A-dec in Newberg to Laika in Hillsboro.

If you have materials and or/reports that would be helpful for the Prosperity Council to review, please upload them here. (Max 16MB)

- Economic Impacts of Energy Trust of Oregon's 2023 Program Activities (most recently completed study), accessible at https://www.energytrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/ETO-PY2023-Final-04_29_2024.pdf

Draft

Oregon Economic Development Strategy

Clean and Resilient Economy input

February, 2026

OREGON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Clean and Resilient Economy input

Draft

PREFACE

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the Oregon Development Strategy. We're providing input with a Clean & Resilient lens.

This document presents an initial growth strategy architecture for organizing and accelerating Oregon's Clean and Resilient Economy.

This is not a final strategy or formal consensus document — it is a structured starting point. Gaps exist, reflecting timing and sequencing, not intentional omission.

The framing reflects publicly available data and input from across stakeholder entities (see appendix for example source information). We are grateful to the many partners who contributed insight, perspective and their personal time to help shape this input. We are acutely aware that that this draft will benefit greatly through more organized activation, expanded participation, and shared authorship across the ecosystem.

This document is designed to clarify opportunity, provide a shared organizing model, and accelerate coordinated action. It is intended for a wide audience of leaders and partners (from economic development, to industry leaders, workforce, academia, capital, public leadership, and communities/community organizations).

AI was applied to this document content to critique and guide areas needing more clarity.

Thank you again for the opportunity to help Oregon lead in the next economic cycle.

Kind Regards,
Clean and Resilient Economy, contributing citizens

OREGON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Draft

Clean and Resilient Economy input- context

OREGON'S COMPETITIVENESS INFLECTION POINT

Oregon has long been a state that builds what's next.

From semiconductors and advanced manufacturing to food systems & agriculture, forestry, outdoor products, technology, and energy infrastructure, Oregon competes in high-value traded sectors that shape our GDP and national position. We possess distinctive structural advantages:

- Advanced manufacturing and semiconductor expertise
- Abundant and reliable power resources
- Strong research institutions and applied innovation capacity
- Entrepreneurial culture and engineering talent
- Strategic West Coast access and global trade corridors
- Rural and industrial regions positioned for production growth

These assets align directly with the Oregon Prosperity Roadmap's focus on expanding traded-sector industries, strengthening innovation capacity, modernizing infrastructure, and driving regional competitiveness.

Today, global markets are undergoing structural realignment.

Energy systems are modernizing. Supply chains are reshoring. Industrial production is digitizing. Data infrastructure and advanced materials are expanding. Manufacturing investment is concentrating in regions that demonstrate coordinated industrial strategy. All while considering efficiency and risk.

This is not a cyclical shift. It is a generational reconfiguration of production, infrastructure, capital allocation and talent.

States that organize visible, investable sector platforms — aligning industry, capital, workforce, infrastructure, and research — are capturing disproportionate private investment, anchoring supply chains, and expanding durable job growth. Those that remain fragmented are exporting innovation and losing industrial scale.

Oregon has the assets to lead in this next economic cycle. What we lack is coordinated economic architecture.

Our strengths remain distributed across agencies, regions, and initiatives without a unifying platform that concentrates effort, aligns capital, and signals market intent. Capital formation is diffuse. Commercialization pathways are uneven. Workforce systems are not consistently synchronized with emerging industrial demand.

At this moment of national industrial acceleration, fragmentation is a competitive liability.

The next three to five years will determine whether Oregon converts structural advantage into sustained industrial leadership – or watches investment, talent, and production concentrate elsewhere.

OREGON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Clean and Resilient Economy

Executive Summary

Draft

Oregon should formally designate **Clean & Resilient Economy** as a priority high-potential traded-sector platform and deploy coordinated leadership to accelerate growth and scale. This is not a new program. It is an organizing move.

Clean & Resilient Economy represents a convergence of high-value traded sectors central to Oregon's competitive future: clean tech & advance manufacturing, clean energy, transportation & mobility, food systems & agriculture, built environment, outdoor gear & apparel, forestry & wood products, clean industrial manufacturing, and natural resource innovation,. These industries are already present in Oregon. What is missing is structured concentration and coordinated scale for leadership in the Clean & Resilient economy.

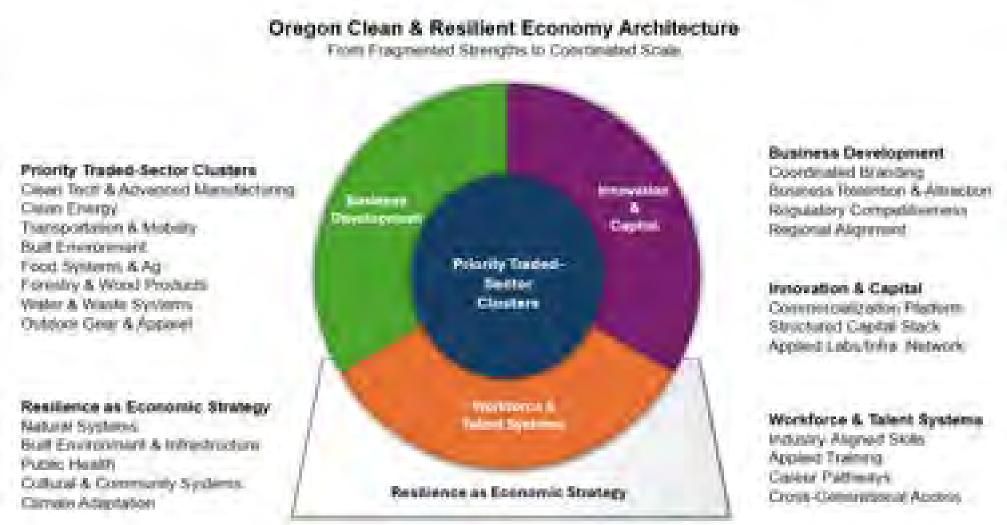
Formal designation under Business Oregon – aligned with the Prosperity Plan and integrated into the Economic Development Strategy, creates a visible platform for:

- Concentrating industry clusters
- Aligning capital formation and commercialization pathways
- Synchronizing workforce systems with production demand
- Coordinating infrastructure and resilience deployment
- Signaling market confidence to private investors and industry partners

Regions that win the next decade will be those that move from diffuse assets to integrated economic systems. Oregon has the structural ingredients. We must now provide the architecture.

The strategy outlined in this document:

- Identifies priority traded-sector clusters for focused concentration
- Proposes an integrated economic architecture connecting industry, capital & research, workforce, infrastructure & resilience and business development
- Recommends an operating model for cross-sector coordination and stewardship
- Defines near-term activation steps to validate alignment and accelerate scale



The competitive window is finite. Decisions made in the next three to five years will shape Oregon's industrial and supply chain footprint and traded-sector growth trajectory for decades.

Formal Clean & Resilient designation and disciplined coordination now position Oregon not simply to participate in the next economic cycle – but to lead within it.

CLEAN and RESILIENT ECONOMY

Organizing Architecture

From Fragmented Strengths to Coordinated Scale

Oregon can Lead - If We Organize

CLEAN INDUSTRIES

Concentrate on high-opportunity sectors where Oregon has structural advantage, representing engines of traded- sector growth, export potential and durable job creation.

- Clean Tech/Adv Mfg
- Clean Energy
- Transportation & Mobility
- Built Environment
- Outdoor Gear & Apparel
- Food Systems & Ag
- Forestry & Wood Products
- Clean Manufacturing
- Water & Wastewater
- Life Sciences, Health & Pharma
- Legal & Prof Services

Connected clusters:

- Resilient Cities
- Circularity

INNOVATION & CAPITAL

To retain and scale high-potential companies, Oregon must establish:

- A strong Clean Industry Command Center providing technical assistance, commercialization acceleration, and market access support.
- Structured, multi-stage access to growth capital- from proof through scale
- Shared applied infrastructure and industry-aligned Labs organized around priority clusters
- Boundary-spanning partnerships that integrate research, prototyping, advanced manufacturing and scale-up capacity.

Without coordinated innovation and capital architecture, companies, talent and production will scale elsewhere.

WORKFORCE & TALENT SYSTEMS

Workforce systems must evolve alongside industry demand. Oregon must:.

- Strengthen ‘applied’ talent strategies aligned to priority clusters
- Expand access to clean career pathways across generations
- Increase industry-integrated training models
- Build ‘Awareness’ and engagement to broaden participation

A resilient clean economy requires workforce systems designed for adaption, not static credentialing.

CLEAN BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Leadership requires disciplined economic positioning. Oregon must:

- Align clean branding and business attraction strategies
- Coordinate regional economic development efforts
- Balance regulatory leadership with competitive investment climate
- Improve retention, recruitment and scale-up support

Brand without infrastructure fails. Infrastructure without brand remains invisible.

RESILIENCE AS ECONOMIC STRATEGY

Clean leadership must embed adaptation and resilience across:

- Natural systems
- Built environment & infrastructure
- Public Health
- Cultural & Community Systems
- Climate Adaptation

Resilience is not an add on- it is a competitiveness multiplier.

CLEAN AND RESILIENT ECONOMY
Industry Activation Lens

Draft

Cluster & Sub-clusters

Examples of leading and merging Clean & Resilient Organizations

Clean Tech/ Adv Mfg

- Semiconductors
- Computers & Electronics
- AI & Data
- Unmanned Vehicle Tech
- Robotics
- Networks & Cyber
- Software Solutions
- Web & Cloud

Clean Energy

- Generation(Solar, Wind, Geothermal, Retrofits)
- Storage
- Transmission
- Distribution
- Development, Permitting & Siting
- Grid Dev & Management

Transportation & Mobility

- Urban Planning & Design
- Air & Space
- Ground & Rail
- Marine
- Planning & Logistics

Built Environment

- Green Construction
- Building Energy & Efficiency
- Clean Heating & Cooling
- Strategic Growth, Land Use, Zoning and Housing Dev.

Food Systems & Ag

- Ag Tech & Automation
- Agribusiness
- Food Science & Processing, Mfg, Dist.
- Soil Health Management
- Water Systems
- Animal Systems

Forestry & Wood Products

- Wood-engineered Products
- Forest Carbon Management (CCS, DAC, Carbon Markets)
- Climate Adaptive forest management
- Fire Management

Outdoor Gear & Apparel

- Innovation & Design
- Sustainable Materials
- Development & Manufacti
- Circularity

Clean Manufacturing

- Engineering & Advanced Engineering
- Industrial Machinery
- Production & Automation
- Safety & Quality Assurance (EH&S)

Other:

- Water & Wastewater Mgmt
- Life Sciences, Healthcare & Pharma
- Legal & Professional Services

CLEAN AND RESILIENT ECONOMY
Organized Activation

Draft

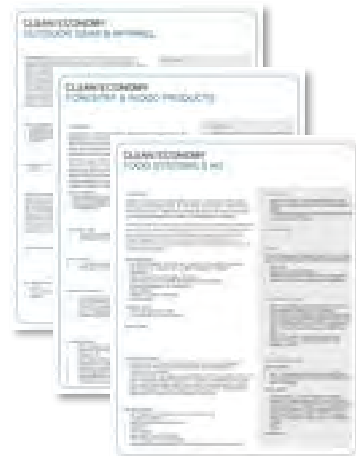
Oregon can lead, if we organize and prioritize.

Oregon must align, coordinate and concentrate efforts in priority traded-sectors — areas of strength, connected cluster strength, and untapped areas of expertise and capabilities.

Aligning & Coordinating Industries

Concentrate and coordinate our priority traded sector clusters for greatest activation, with:

- Growth strategies
- Capital formation and commercialization pathways
- Workforce systems and production demand
- Infrastructure and resilience deployment
- Signaling market confidence



Activating — bolder and wider

With Oregon's strength in the Clean & Resilient Economy, we have the opportunity to firmly lead with 1) focused execution, 2) ramping connected themes, and 3) growing underutilized strengths:

Clear focus and execution where we're strong:
- Clean Energy
- Clean Tech/Adv Mfg
- Transportation & Mobility
- Built Environment (start, energy efficiency & retrofits)
- Food & Ag
- Outdoor Gear & Apparel

Ramp connected cluster themes:
- Circularity- Opportunity to connect x-cluster AND drive waste into economic value.
- Resilient Cities (previously Green Cities)- We are a leader in sub-clusters and have the opportunity to market newer Resilient City orientation.

Grow Underutilized Opportunities:
- Legal & Professional Services- We have one of the strongest Clean legal and professional service expertise, nationally.
- Water Systems- with the increased attention around water, Oregon is quickly becoming a leader in water systems (Ag, Data Centers, Resilience).
- Forest-based Carbon Solutions and sustainable forestry

Geography Perspective:

Ensuring geographic balance, workforce inclusion, rural participation and equitable access to opportunity. Collaborating with Cluster, capital and infrastructure strategies and activation:

Intentionally organizing and supporting:
- Economic, Innovation and boundaries for the longer-term
- Cluster focus priorities
- Innovation Labs
- Resilience efforts

CLEAN AND RESILIENT ECONOMY
Clean Innovation & Capital Architecture

Draft

Turning Early-Stage Strength into Long-term Economic Growth

Oregon's strength in early-stage innovation has not yet translated into durable scale infrastructure. While the state generates promising clean economy startups and technical talent, commercialization pathways remain fragmented and capital formation inconsistent across growth stages. Without coordinated systems for capital deployment, applied infrastructure, and commercialization alignment, high-potential firms will continue to mature elsewhere. To convert innovation into long-term economic capture, Oregon must institutionalize a Clean Innovation and Capital Architecture that prioritizes retention, scale, and cluster-aligned growth.

COORDINATED COMMERCIALIZATION

Aligning technical assistance, regulatory navigation, industry partnerships and economic development- reducing friction and shortening time-to-scale

- Business Development & Management
- Economic Development
- Access to Resources, Network
- Policy Guidance
- Building Strategic partnerships
- Building collaborative communities (community engagement)

STRUCTURED CAPITAL STRATEGY

Prioritizing private investment, uses public funds catalytically, and aligns capital deployment with priority traded-sector clusters across growth stages of growth.

Support early, mid and growth stage Oregon-based Clean Economy build-out by:

- Organizing Capital acquisition and deployment needs
- Providing incentives for R&D and innovation
- Establish capital strategic partners and network
- Organize and coordinate funding committee (s)
- Connect Innovators and Investors
- Convene regular capital events
- Manage on-going capital access processes

NETWORK OF APPLIED INFRASTRUCTURE

Shared labs, prototyping environments, pilot manufacturing capacity and testbeds- organized around priority clusters and built through public-private coordination of existing assets before new construction.

- Support Clean innovation from start-up to scale-up
- For prototyping, new manufacturing, distribution and scale-up.
- Focus on infrastructure/Labs that advance Cluster/sub-clusters Clean leadership
- Coordinate with the Support Center needs
- Integrate with Skills and Talent strategies and capacity needs.
- Consider the eco-boundaries (watersheds), in planning/siting infrastructure for longer term thinking (vs. just by Districts)

CLEAN AND RESILIENT ECONOMY
Workforce & Talent Systems

NOTE: Input provided into OREWC '26-'28 Strategy focused on Clean Energy, with a template for other industries (Jan '26)

Keep pace with skills and capacity needs, more 'applied' with partner ecosystem.

EDUCATION & TRAINING

Align & Support Pathways, Education and Programs

Collaborate with stakeholders to map priority Clean Energy career pathway systems *and stackable credentials for entry and advancement in the industry* (develop, validate, publish*) [OCEWC 1.1].

Support the development and coordination of post-secondary opportunities in the clean energy sector: [OCEWC 1.1].

Develop and strengthen targeted initiatives to recruit younger workers to Oregon, positioning the state as a destination for early-career professionals [Prosperity] [OCEWC 1.3].

Build on the momentum of successful initiatives like Future Ready Oregon to scale proven strategies and drive inclusive workforce outcomes. [Prosperity].

RESPONSIVE & ACCESSIBLE

Strengthened and Applied- Skills currency, Access & Representation and Community Engagement

Foster collaboration and structured partnerships among businesses, regions, education, workforce organizations *and Communities* to ensure talent strategies *and capacity* are responsive to industry needs [Prosperity]. [OCEWC 1.2]

Expand access to training programs that help current workers adapt to evolving industry demands and advance their careers [Prosperity].

Up-level and strengthen the role of cluster-focused 'labs' for applied training, faster industry outcomes, and community-engagement, better keeping pace with rapidly changing industry/skill needs.[New].

Cultivate a statewide Clean Energy community of practice (CoP), that promotes and supports collaboration, resilience and transparency.[OCEWC 3.1]

Prioritize that all communities benefit equitably from Clean Energy workforce growth [.[OCEWC 3.2] .

GOVERNANCE

Organize & Sustain Coalition & Communications

Support Clean Policies and programs that promote job quality, stability and long-term career pathways, especially in key sectors [Prosperity]

Finalize and operationalize OCEWC's long-term governance model [OCEWC 2.1]

Develop a sustainable funding and resource alignment strategy that supports partners and members [OCEWC 2.2]

Work together to build and align a unified advocacy platform to sustain Clean Energy workforce investments and high-quality careers [OCEWC 2.3]

* Awareness- Consider how external/internal info is platformed/published.

CLEAN AND RESILIENT ECONOMY
Resilience As Economic Strategy

Draft

NOTE: Integrated directly with Oregon's 2021 Climate Change Adaptation Framework. Did not have opportunity to update with them.

Resilience is not an add on — it is a competitive multiplier.

NATURAL SYSTEMS	Support robust functioning of Oregon's terrestrial, aquatic, coastal and marine ecosystems as climate changes. • Enhance Water security for both in-stream and consumptive uses • Support functioning of terrestrial ecosystems • Support ocean health and blue carbon ecosystems • Manage wildfire risk • Control invasive species
BUILT ENVIRONMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE	Ensure building, utilities, and infrastructure are resilient to extreme weather and climate change. • Update engineering heuristics and design standards • Plan for future conditions • Support climate-resilient building and site management practices • Design and build resilient water projects • Design and build resilient energy projects • Design and build resilient transportation projects • Support access to ports • Expand availability of broadband • Seek and implement co-benefit opportunities
PUBLIC HEALTH	Reduce climate-related health risks and promote community resilience, especially among people and communities who are disproportionately affected. • Actively engage with priority communities in a coordinated and well-resourced way • Work with partner agencies on policies to improve and protect air quality and water security • Increase the diversity of the State's workforce engaged in climate work • Resource Oregon's public health system • Analyze community impacts • Support community-driven and place-based climate adaptations • Consider opportunities to implement recommendation outlined in Climate Equity Blueprint.
CULTURAL & COMMUNITY SYSTEMS	Research, plan for and adapt to the impacts of climate change on Oregon's cultural landscapes. • Recognize, collaborate and consult with Tribal governments • Broadly identify cultural resource are at risk • Ensure that historic preservation programs considers climate change and equity • Reduce exposure of vulnerable of historic, cultural and archeological resources while also protecting the environment.
CLIMATE ADAPTATION	Ensure equitable, livable and engaged communities in response to the impacts of climate change. • Identify Impacted Communities • Build capacity of community based organizations and create more opportunities to participate in decision making. • Use DEI best practices in state decision-making • Leverage the statewide land use planning program • Review Oregon Land use planning goals • Focus natural disaster mitigation activities on climate change and equity

Source references: Oregon's 2021 Climate Change Adaptation Framework.

CLEAN AND RESILIENT ECONOMY

Operating Model Considerations

Draft

Organizing for Success– Leadership will not emerge from aspiration alone, but through sustained executive alignment and a defined operating model.

The Clean & Resilient Economy growth strategy needs more than alignment– it requires clear accountability to ensure durability, legitimacy and coordinated action.

An illustrative operating model, below, considers a four-tier governance structure. Anchored by Business Oregon, as a steward, the model integrates executive authority, industry ownership, capital coordination and regional representation.

		Key Decision-Making

EXECUTIVE SPONSORSHIP	**Tier 1- Executive Steering Committee (State-level anchor)**
	• Who: Business Oregon, Lead Steward; , Governor's Office liaison, key state agencies, leaders of priority industries/, and rotating regional representatives.
	• Purpose:
	  • Establish State-wide targets and guardrails
	  • Align economic policies – e.g. economic, energy, workforce, resilience
	  • Approve cluster priorities and capital tools
	  • Align policy across agencies,
	  • Align federal funding strategy
	  • And oversee annual performance review.
		Approves Cluster priorities, Capital Tools, Statewide Targets

INDUSTRY-LED CLUSTERS	**Tier 2- Industry-Led Cluster Councils**
	• Who: Industry executive leaders aligned to priority traded sector clusters, growth-stage founders, industry associations, with embedded workforce and capital representation. Prosperity-Council associated liaison.
	• Purpose:
	  • Define and align on cluster Clean & Resilient growth strategies,
	  • Identify capital and infrastructure gaps,
	  • Align workforce demand signals, and
	  • Report quarterly performance scorecards (e.g. Clean Energy)
		Defines implementation strategies w/I approved guardrails

INNOVATION & CAPITAL	**Tier 3- Innovation & Capital Advisory/SteerCo**
	• Who: Capital providers, commercialization leaders, applied infrastructure operators, and economic development representatives. (*OEN++)
	• Purpose:
	  • Align capital deployment,
	  • Coordinate commercialization systems,
	  • Optimize applied infrastructure, reduce duplication
	  • Monitor leverage of public-to-private investment.
		Coordinates capital and infra alignment to support Cluster execution

REGIONS & COMMUNITIES	**Tier 4- Regional & Community Advisory Network**
	• Who: Regional economic development districts, tribal governments, rural development organizations, workforce boards and community-based partners.
	• Purpose:
	  • Ensure geographic balance, workforce inclusion, rural participation and equitable access to opportunity.
	  • Provide structured advisory input into cluster and capital strategies and
	  • Submit an annual regional summary to Tier 1 for statewide review.
		Provides formal advisory input and regional consultation

CLEAN AND RESILIENT ECONOMY

Executive Activation Pathway (90 day plan)

Draft

Convert Oregon's structural advantages into a coordinated, investable Clean & Resilient Economy platform built for scale.

		Outcomes
ESTABLISH 0-30 Days	**Structural Commitment & Focus** Formally designate *Clean and Resilient Economy* as a priority traded-sector platform under the Prosperity Roadmap. • Name Business Oregon as steward with Executive Sponsor. • Stand-up interim Executive SteeringCo. (lean, empowered). • Validate and narrow to 3–4 priority clusters. • Define 3–5 measurable 12-month outcomes.	*Clear ownership, disciplined focus, defined ambition.*
ALIGN 30-60 Days	**Concentrate Effort & Reduce Fragmentation** Convene targeted executive roundtables to confirm: • Capital stack gaps • Infrastructure constraints • Workforce demand signals Launch lean Industry Cluster Councils (executive-led) . Stand-up Innovation & Capital Advisory to: • Map commercialization pathways • Coordinate capital / funding strategy • Inventory applied infrastructure assets	*Shared priorities, capital clarity, coordinated growth strategy*
SIGNAL 60-90 Days	**Demonstrate Organization & Market Intent** Governor/Prosperity Council + Business Oregon announce: • Formal designation • Priority clusters • Named leadership • 12-month targets • Publish concise 12-month Operating Plan. Identify 2–3 early proof points: • Coordinated public-private capital pursuit • Workforce pilot • Infrastructure alignment action	*Credible signal to investors, regions, and industry that Oregon is organized(ing) for scale.*

OREGON PROSPERITY ROADMAP

Clean And Resilient Economy

Appendix- Example list of sources

Draft

Oregon Food & Beverage Council Strategy (Feb, 2025)
Oregon Clean Technology Task Force Report (Sept, 2024)
House Bill 4112
Oregon Semiconductor Competitiveness Task Force (Aug 2022)
Oregon Economic and fiscal impact of semiconductor industry expansion in Oregon
Oregon Business for Climate
Oregon Clean Energy Workforce Coalition, Strategic POV
HECC Strategic Plan (2024-2029)
Future Ready Oregon- Tech and Mfg Profiles
Prosper Portland, Green Cities Action Plan
Greater Portland Development Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
PCEF Climate Investment Fund
Business Oregon Annual Report (June, 2024)
Oregon Prosperity Roadmap
Oregon State Agency Climate Change Adaptation Framework (‘2021)
Oregon State Agency, Natural and Working Lands 2023 Report
HB 2990 A: Community Resilience Hubs
Technology Association of Oregon- input (TAO)
Oregon Innovation Foundation- input (OIF)
The Wave Foundation
Portland Public Schools, input (PPS)
Blueprint Oregon
Lemelson Foundation – Co-creating a just, climate innovation ecosystem for Oregon (initial POV)
Best Practices from several clean economy states/regions- CO, WA, DE, MA/MIT, UK)
Green Workforce Career Clusters (National Career Cluster Framework)
Industry Taxonomy- ISIC international industry code Framework
ARUP City Resilience Framework (2024)
ICOR Community Resilience Framework (CRF)
IRPF Infrastructure Resilience Planning

March 31, 2026

Governor's Prosperity Council
Office of the Governor
State of Oregon

Dear Members of the Governor's Prosperity Council,

On behalf of the Portland Metro Chamber, I write to thank you for your leadership at a pivotal moment for Oregon's economic future and to offer our perspective informed by the Chamber's recent *State of the Economy* report and aligned with the concerns outlined by the Oregon Business Council.

The data is clear: both the Portland region and the state of Oregon are at an inflection point. What we are experiencing is not a typical cyclical slowdown, but a structural shift that demands urgency, alignment, and a higher level of policy ambition.

Consider the major conclusions of the 2026 State of the Regional Economy Report:

- The Portland region has been in a localized recession since 2023
- The region's consumer sentiment has been last or nearly last of the top 50 metropolitan regions in the country.
- The region is nearly last multifamily housing permitting in the nation, and 60% of all permitting activity in the region is in SW Washington.
- Portland's commercial office vacancies are the highest in modern history and one of the highest in the nation.
- Portland is one of the last in the nation to recover our downtown foot traffic for office workers.
- While foot traffic is incrementally growing due to Herculean public private effort, at this pace, it will take us an additional decade to fully recover from the pandemic.
- The Portland region, dependent on trade, saw the largest drop in export value in the country.
- The regio is 80 out of 81 on real estate invest-ability

- The Portland metro region has consistently been at or near the bottom of 50 American cities in terms of employment.

To make matters even more concerning, population growth has slowed to historic lows and will stagnate or decline for the foreseeable future. With the era of natural population growth clearly behind us, future growth will be increasingly dependent on international migration and intentional attraction instead of the consistent domestic in-migration that fueled the region's expansion over the past 50 years. This aligns with the Oregon Business Council's observation that the state is entering an era of "population scarcity," fundamentally changing the economic equation from managing growth to generating it.

Taken together, these trends point to a region—and a state—facing mounting structural pressures: slowing growth, declining competitiveness in traded sectors, constrained housing supply, and weakening economic confidence. This has resulted in broad private sector divestment from the region and a loss of approximately $3 billion in taxable income from Multnomah County alone.

We strongly agree with the Oregon Business Council's core premise: Oregon is at a "moment of economic reckoning." Incrementalism will not be sufficient. The scale of the challenge requires a coordinated, durable strategy that restores Oregon's value proposition for businesses, workers, and investment.

From the Chamber's perspective, the work of the Prosperity Council should focus on a clear set of priorities that directly address these structural challenges:

1. Reform taxes by December 31, 2029:

In 2017, Congress passed tax reform that nearly eliminated State and Local Tax deductions (SALT). As a result, high income tax dependent states like Oregon faced a massive decline in competitiveness for middle and high-wage jobs. While a practical reaction to the reduction in the SALT deductions would have been to pivot from dependence on income taxes, however, we did the opposite by enacting two new local income taxes in 2020. Not only are we the highest marginal tax rate in the nation, as well as the only county in America that has four income taxes, but also the highest effective tax rate in the nation.

Subsequently, in 2025 Congress enacted HB1 which temporarily raised SALT deductions, but this temporary relief will expire on December 31, 2029. If we have not reformed our taxes to a more sustainable, broad based, revenue system by that date that significantly reduces dependence on income tax Oregon will be at a permanent structural disadvantage. It is critical that we shift our primary revenue sources by introducing some version of a broad based, low rate, consumption tax. If we do not make this shift, Oregon will have virtually no economic case to make to job creators to keep and grow middle income jobs here.

We urge you to develop a multi-biennium legislative plan that brings labor and business to the table to craft historic tax reforms that reduce income tax rates and moves Oregon out of the top 10 highest income tax states (currently Wisconsin is the 10th highest income taxed state). Resulting tax reform must be enacted for an effective date of no later than January 1, 2030.

2. Restore traded sector competitiveness.
Oregon's long-term prosperity depends on its ability to attract and grow industries that bring new income into the state. Recent losses of major industrial and clean-tech investments—often due to site readiness, regulatory complexity, and infrastructure constraints—underscore the need for immediate action to improve competitiveness.

3. Unlock housing production at scale.
The region cannot grow—or compete—without significantly increasing housing supply. This will require meaningful reforms to land use, permitting, and development processes, as well as new approaches to financing and delivering housing at all income levels. To be clear – there is no path toward meeting Governor Kotek's annual housing production goals without adopting aggressive policies that will incentivize private sector, market rate housing development.

4. Rebuild the state's economic value proposition.
As talent and capital become increasingly mobile, Oregon must address the cumulative impact of its tax structure, regulatory environment, and cost profile. Competitiveness today is not defined by a single policy, but by the overall experience of doing business and living in the state.

5. Modernize regulatory and infrastructure systems. Delays, uncertainty, infrastructure constraints, and antiquated land use policies — particularly related to industrial land and energy capacity—are increasingly determining whether Oregon wins or loses major investments. Oregon's permitting system needs to be transformed from one of the most cumbersome and slowest in the nation to one of the most efficient and predictable. Oregon must make the necessary updates to land use and infrastructure policy necessary to grow, attract, and retain the high wage jobs of the 21st century.

6. Strengthen talent pipelines and population growth.
With natural population growth near zero, Oregon must compete more effectively to attract and retain talent, while improving education and workforce alignment with industry needs.

These priorities are not new—but the urgency is. Today's economic challenges are different from the past in that the consequences of inaction are becoming visible in the data: fewer jobs, fewer investments, slower growth, and reduced fiscal capacity to support public services.

At the same time, Oregon's strengths remain significant. Our innovation economy, natural assets, and entrepreneurial culture continue to provide a strong foundation. The question before us is whether we will align policy, investment, and leadership to build on those strengths—or allow structural challenges to erode them over time.

The Governor's Prosperity Council has a critical role to play in answering that question. Its recommendations must be clear, actionable, and commensurate with the scale of the challenge. Just as importantly, they must signal—to businesses, workers, and investors—that Oregon is prepared to compete and to lead in a more competitive national and global economy.

The Portland Metro Chamber stands ready to partner with the Council, the Governor's office, and stakeholders across the state to advance solutions that restore growth, expand opportunity, and strengthen Oregon's economic future.

Thank you for your leadership and your commitment to this important work.

Oregon Prosperity Council – Input Submission
Tillamook County Creamery Association
Contact: Trevor Beltz, Manager of Gov. Rel. & Pub. Aff.
tbeltz@tillamook.com
March 31, 2026

Oregon Prosperity Council Survey Responses

Business Climate

1. **What challenge would you like addressed? What is the biggest barrier or friction point?**

We have three concrete barriers with direct financial or operational consequences for Tillamook and our farmer-owners.

Regulatory coherence and the eastern Oregon agricultural economy. Tillamook's Boardman facility is part of an integrated regional system: food processors, port infrastructure, and irrigated farmland that forms the economic backbone of eastern Oregon. Wastewater from processing is treated and applied to farmland, and the port sustains itself through industrial user fees. Thousands of jobs depend on these parts working together. We raise this not to litigate any regulatory decision, but because the Council should understand what is at stake when policies made in isolation by different agencies interact with a system this interconnected. The governor has been clear that retaining businesses and supporting agricultural investment are priorities, which we appreciate. We also think the Council is well-positioned to ask whether the state's regulatory posture is aligned with that goal in practice, not just in stated intent.

Farmworker overtime rules that harm the workers they are meant to protect. Oregon's agricultural overtime law creates a counterproductive outcome. Farmers cap worker hours to avoid overtime liability. Workers seeking more hours take them at multiple farms, increasing biosecurity risk and reducing individual earnings. The law was written to protect workers. In practice it limits their earning potential and introduces disease risk to dairy herds. Oregon dropped to a 48-hour threshold in 2025, with a path to 40 hours in 2027. There have been no winners.

The Recycling Modernization Act's treatment of federally mandated food packaging. Tillamook is a registered participant in Oregon's EPR program and is paying fees in good standing. Oregon's program includes ecomodulation, but the structure assumes producers can redesign their packaging to earn credits. For food manufacturers whose packaging is constrained by FDA food safety regulation, that assumption does not hold. DEQ has already denied exemption requests for food-contact packaging, citing that federal regulation does not preclude state compliance. We are not arguing that it does. We are arguing that penalizing packaging decisions made in service of federal food safety requirements is a design flaw the Legislature should correct. The fee methodology also remains confidential, which is not a defensible way to run a public regulatory program.

2. **What solution or specific change would you recommend?**

On regulatory coherence: the Council should include an explicit call for cross-agency alignment on economic development goals, particularly in regions where agricultural economies are most exposed to cumulative regulatory impact. Oregon should be able to articulate a coherent posture toward the businesses it says it wants to retain.

On farmworker overtime: raise the agricultural overtime threshold to 55 hours per week. Our farmer-owners identify this as the practical point where workers earn meaningful overtime without triggering artificial hour caps.

On the RMA: create a separate fee category for packaging required to meet FDA food safety standards, with a lower base rate and phase-in timeline. Require the Circular Action Alliance to publish its fee methodology and accept independent audit. Establish meaningful ecomodulation credit for companies actively investing in sustainable alternatives, including where those alternatives are not yet deployable at scale.

3. **What would success look like in 2-3 years?**

Oregon operates with a published cross-agency framework for economic development. Regional economies are not left navigating conflicting agency mandates without recourse. The agricultural overtime threshold is adjusted and farmworkers are earning more hours at single operations. The RMA includes a transparent, auditable fee structure with a separate category for food manufacturers with federally mandated packaging.

4. **Who has to act?**

The Governor's office, to direct cross-agency review of regulatory posture in agricultural regions. The Legislature, to adjust the overtime threshold and reform RMA governance. DEQ and ODA jointly, to develop a published framework on agricultural wastewater jurisdiction.

5. **Which existing state programs do you want to see continue?**

ODA is a strong and collaborative partner and we want to see that relationship and its resources preserved. Oregon's food processor property tax exemption for qualified machinery and equipment is a meaningful tool that directly benefits dairy processing operations and should be maintained. Rural enterprise zones provide property tax relief that makes capital investment in rural communities more viable; Oregon's rural enterprise zones are worth protecting and expanding. These programs work. The gap is not in what exists but in what is missing: a competitive, real-time investment incentive that lets Oregon show up when a capital decision is actually on the table.

6. **What promising models or best practices have you seen in other states?**

When Tillamook began exploring operations in Decatur, Illinois, the regional economic development corporation quickly became a trusted partner and led the effort with a clear philosophy: they would find a way to solve any problem, and they were not going to lose this opportunity. The incentive package they built was custom, designed around our specific priorities rather than a standard offer. When our needs evolved after the initial package was finalized, they modified it. They made sure we were aware of every available incentive at every level of government and helped us navigate all of it. When we needed to create a controlled campus around the facility, they used their local connections to help us acquire surrounding properties, vacated city streets, fenced the perimeter, and razed existing buildings to make it possible.

The team committed to monthly calls for more than two years, with a standing mission to remove any obstacle that surfaced. That commitment was tested repeatedly, and they delivered every time. Those calls continue today, having evolved into ongoing collaboration on plant optimization, future capital projects, and master planning. The EDC director remains our single point of contact for everything Decatur, and multiple functions within Tillamook now engage with her directly. That is what it looks like when a state decides it wants to compete for investment.

<u>Workforce</u>

Tillamook

1. **What challenge would you like addressed? What is the biggest barrier or friction point?**

In rural Oregon the primary workforce challenge is a livability gap, not a skills gap. Tillamook County is a documented childcare desert: there are fewer than three regulated childcare slots available for every child who needs one. Housing is equally constrained. When we recruit workers from outside the county, we are asking them to move somewhere they cannot find housing or childcare. For families where both parents work, that is not a livable offer.

The problem runs deeper than access. Childcare is among the lowest-paid skilled professions in the country. Finding qualified providers who can sustain a living wage in a rural, high-cost community like Tillamook is its own challenge. Oregon's licensing and certification requirements add cost and credential burden that further limits who enters the profession. Rural childcare often operates at a structural loss indefinitely without subsidy. The market alone will not solve this, and programs designed for the Portland metro do not address why a skilled worker declines a job in Tillamook or Boardman.

Separately, we are seeing professional employees choose Vancouver, Washington over Portland in response to Oregon's income tax burden, accumulated local taxes in Multnomah County, and cost of living. Oregon is losing talent at both ends.

2. **What solution or specific change would you recommend?**

Treat rural childcare infrastructure as an economic development investment, not a social services line item. Solving this in rural Oregon will not look the same as solving it in the Willamette Valley. The state should support flexible, community-designed models rather than imposing urban-scaled licensing frameworks on rural providers.

TCCA commissioned a county-wide childcare study and has been engaged in building a plan alongside Adventist Health, Hampton Lumber, and Tillamook Bay Community College. That work identified four interconnected needs: ongoing subsidies to cover the gap between what state ERDC funding pays and what families can actually afford; scholarships for vulnerable families not eligible for other public support; stability grants and business coaching for existing licensed providers to keep them operating; and new program development, including the microcenter model enabled by recent state legislation, which reduces barriers to entry for new childcare entrepreneurs. Workforce development for childcare workers themselves, including apprenticeship pathways, is also needed to grow the pipeline of qualified providers willing to work in rural communities.

In an ideal world, childcare hours would also reflect the reality of manufacturing and frontline worker schedules. Solutions that only work 8 to 5 do not serve our plant workforce, which operates 24/7.

On housing: Oregon's prevailing wage law requires contractors to pay area-standard wages on projects that receive public funding — a policy designed to ensure taxpayer dollars support quality jobs. The intent is reasonable. The problem is that BOLI's interpretation of what triggers the requirement has expanded well beyond clearly public projects. When private developers apply for state financing programs to fill funding gaps, the act of accepting that public money now triggers prevailing wage requirements for the entire project, including portions funded entirely with private dollars. In Tillamook County, a 72-unit workforce housing development applied for Middle Income Revolving Loan Fund support to help close a financing gap. That application triggered prevailing wage requirements the developers did not anticipate, adding $2 to $3 million in labor costs and creating a larger funding gap than the one they were trying to solve. The tool meant to help make the project viable made it harder to build. Oregon cannot solve its rural workforce housing shortage while a well-intentioned wage policy functions as an unpredictable tax on the public financing programs designed to spur that housing. Prevailing wage exemptions or alternative compliance pathways for smaller residential projects in rural workforce shortage counties should be part of this Council's recommendations.

3. **What would success look like in 2-3 years?**

Tillamook County has measurable licensed childcare capacity with hours that serve manufacturing and frontline workers. Employers can recruit workers with children without childcare being a disqualifying factor. At least one rural workforce housing project has been completed. The state has adopted an employer-provided childcare tax credit that draws private capital into rural childcare supply.

4. **Who has to act?**

The Legislature, on prevailing wage reform and employer childcare tax credits. The Governor's office, to designate rural childcare as an economic development priority and direct Business Oregon to fund it accordingly. Employers, including Tillamook: we are on county task forces, have funded a planning study, and will stay engaged. The state should create the structure; the private sector will meet it.

5. **Which existing state programs do you want to see continue?**

Oregon's Employment Related Day Care program provides the baseline childcare subsidy that rural families depend on. The Oregon Shared Services Alliance for childcare, recently extended to Tillamook, Clatsop, and Columbia counties, is a meaningful step toward stabilizing existing providers through business coaching and shared administrative support. Both programs should be preserved and expanded. That said, neither is sufficient on its own to move Tillamook County from a childcare desert to functional capacity. The gap between what these programs provide and what the community needs is precisely what we are asking this Council to help address.

6. **What promising models or best practices have you seen in other states?**

The Yamhill County model is worth noting. A traded-sector manufacturer facing workforce losses due to childcare shortages partnered with the regional EDC, local government, and private funders to create Project Oasis — a 100-slot childcare facility backed by corporate-sponsored employee slots and family scholarships that serve families who fall between public assistance eligibility thresholds. The model was built around employer need, not a government program framework.

In Clatsop County, a coalition led by county commissioners and local hospital systems created a grant program to prevent childcare closures, increase slots, and expand family financial assistance. In the first six months, the county saw a 17 percent increase in children served. For context, Clatsop can currently accommodate only 8 percent of its infants and toddlers — a situation directly comparable to Tillamook's.

We funded a 2023 county childcare study that pointed toward the same solutions: subsidies to close the gap between what state assistance pays and what care actually costs, scholarships for families who fall through eligibility cracks, stability grants for existing providers, and new program development including the microcenter model.

The lesson across all three is consistent: the model works when the funding is there and falls apart when it runs out. Both Yamhill and Clatsop are already chasing grants to replace expiring dollars, which is exactly the problem. These examples demonstrate what is possible when resources are behind them. The missing piece is not the model. It is the commitment to sustain it.

Tools for Growth

1. **What challenge would you like addressed? What is the biggest barrier or friction point?**

Oregon's economic development tools exist, but they are not built for competitive, real-time investment decisions. The state has rural enterprise zones, property tax abatements, and loan programs — instruments structured for after-the-fact tax relief rather than active deal-making. What Oregon does not have is the ability to make a proactive, custom offer when a capital decision is actually on the table and the conversation is moving at the speed of business.

The cost of operating in Oregon is the underlying pressure. It costs Tillamook less to manufacture cheese in another state, package it, and ship it back to Oregon than to make it here. That is a supply chain reality, not a negotiating position. The cost stack that drives it is specific: agricultural overtime rules that are among the most restrictive in the country and scheduled to tighten further; energy costs rising as a result of state carbon policy; CAT costs embedded in every supplier invoice even where Tillamook is exempt as a cooperative; property taxes on business equipment; and a milk supply that has contracted significantly as Oregon farms have closed under financial pressure. These costs compound, and they do so against states that have none of them.

This matters not because Tillamook is leaving, but because our farmers are here, our workers are here, and our heritage is here. The question is whether Oregon will be a place where the dairy agricultural ecosystem can sustain and attract investment over the next generation. Can suppliers site here? Can larger farms exist to supply us? Can the next generation of farm families see a viable future in Oregon?

Oregon's land use system presents a separate constraint. The Exclusive Farm Use designation applies uniformly regardless of actual productivity or proximity to infrastructure. Routine farm maintenance — a culvert repair, a drainage project — requires sign-off from an alphabet of state and federal agencies because the regulatory framework was not designed to distinguish between irreplaceable farmland and marginal land. TCCA has a formal commitment to no net loss of farmland in Tillamook County and we stand by it. But the current system does not make that distinction, and that bluntness is costing rural communities the flexibility they need to grow.

2. What solution or specific change would you recommend?

Oregon should develop a competitive rural investment incentive with the flexibility and capitalization to function as a real deal-closing tool. Other states have demonstrated that proactive, discretionary cash-based incentives — structured to move at the pace of a business decision and customized to a company's specific priorities — are effective at retaining and recruiting investment. Oregon's existing toolkit is built primarily around tax abatement and loan programs. Those have value, but they are passive instruments. What is missing is the ability to show up at the table with something competitive when the decision is actually being made.

On land use: we support the creation of a task force to develop a tiered classification system within the Exclusive Farm Use designation, distinguishing genuinely high-productivity land that must be protected, marginal land that could support rural housing or processing development, and land appropriate for conversion in exchange for conservation of higher-value farmland. This is not a call to open Oregon's farmland. It is a call to apply protection where it matters most and create flexibility where the current system is too blunt to serve rural communities well.

3. What would success look like in 2-3 years?

Oregon has a competitive rural investment incentive and has used it to retain or attract at least one significant food or agricultural processing operation that would otherwise have gone elsewhere. The EFU tiered classification task force has produced recommendations the Legislature has acted on. Routine farm permits for low-risk projects move through a single coordinated process rather than requiring sign-off from multiple agencies.

4. Who has to act?

The Legislature and Governor's office, to create and capitalize a rural investment incentive. A governor-appointed task force to conduct the EFU tiered classification review with agricultural stakeholders at the table. Business Oregon, to reorient a portion of its rural capacity toward agricultural and food processing sectors rather than concentrating on technology recruitment.

Tillamook

5. **Which existing state programs do you want to see continue?**

Oregon's rural enterprise zones and property tax abatement programs provide meaningful relief that makes capital investment in rural communities more viable. The food processor property tax exemption for qualified machinery and equipment directly benefits dairy processing operations and should be maintained. These programs are worth protecting. The gap is not that Oregon lacks tools entirely. It is that the existing toolkit is not structured to compete with states that deploy more active, flexible incentives when investment decisions are on the table.

6. **What promising models or best practices have you seen in other states?**

See the Decatur, Illinois experience described under Business Climate. That experience illustrates the contrast precisely. What made the difference was not the size of an incentive check; it was the posture: a team with a mandate to compete for the investment, the flexibility to build a custom solution around our priorities, and a commitment to stay engaged long after the initial deal was done. Oregon has economic development tools. What the Decatur experience revealed is the gap between having tools and having a posture. That is what this Council should address.

April 1, 2026

Oregon's Economic Development Strategy: Lock, Barricade and Delay Investments

If you were searching the world for a nearly ideal climate with ability to grow abundant food and ready access to construction, specialty materials, and technological know-how, it is hard to beat Oregon.

Oregon's strengths:

- Access to fresh water
- Historically low-cost hydroelectric and nuclear power
- Diversified, high value, specialty food crops
- Direct access to abundant high-value fisheries
- Abundant natural resources, especially for building materials –
    - Large healthy forests
    - Strong specialty metals hub near Albany.
- Silicon Forest knowledge and experience
- High value minerals
- I-5 trade corridor gives us ready trade access to great markets from BC to Mexico
- Deepwater ports connecting Oregon to the Pacific Rim and beyond
- High value Universities

Our greatest challenges are man-made. Our policies shun investment, our cultural priorities mock investment, and our tax system punishes investment.

What's Holding us back?

- Most companies use consultants and attorneys when planning a major investment. A state that is high-tax, high-regulation, poor-education, and low economic base is analytically a low-priority investment for businesses.
- Businesses focus on eliminating risks but Oregon specializes in creating uncertain and contentious outcomes.
- Investments are typically time sensitive, states (like Oregon) that delay development are deprioritized for investment.

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The Papé Group, Inc.
PO Box 407, Eugene OR 97440

- Oregon is the 7th highest regulated state in the country:
    - Literally EVERY other state is easier to develop. Oregon has the ONLY statewide:
        - Zoning
        - Urban Growth Boundaries, and
        - Exclusive Farm Use designations.
    - Our land use system is designed to create multiple layers of development vetoes. If you think a project fits the zoning and UGB requirements, Water Watch or 1,000 Friends of Oregon will tie you up in court to kill your project.
- State income taxes are high for corporate and personal income tax. Additional local level taxes, in places like Multnomah County, become tests of sanity for anyone thinking about investing in Oregon.
    - Why would decision makers prioritize bringing a business to a place where their business will be financially less successful and they will be financially punished personally?
- Our Ballot Measure System creates a low barrier for radical legislative ideas. Why risk coming to Oregon when we allow ourselves to be the petri dish for extreme and unpredictable legislation?
- Our K-12 education system is among the worst performing education systems in the country.
    - Our education system rewards adults and ignores student achievement.
        - Inflation adjusted, we provide 50% more funding per student than pre-Measure 5
        - Our teachers are paid in the top quartile
        - Our NAICS ratings are in the bottom decile
        - Our instruction time is among the lowest in the country

In an age where Ai and Robotics are going to begin reshaping how work is performed, states that aren't attracting new jobs and investments will end up in an economic doom loop that could crush working families and government services.

What are we competing against:

- North Carolina has a the Economic Development Partnership of NC (EDPNC) that moves faster than the speed of government to connect companies to sites, workforce and incentives - quickly

- Arizona has economic development offices around the world (7)
- States get more of what they invest in
    - Oregon ranks last in economic development dollars
    - Oregon ranks high in homelessness funding
  - Ironically – we're creating an ecosystem of homelessness initiatives, but we're driving out the taxpayers that we'd need to make programs like this sustainable over time.

The Fixes aren't complicated and don't need to be unique to Oregon
Oregon needs to:

- Mandate a 10 year budget analysis of state revenue and expenditures, identifying costs that are escalating beyond what the state's GDP can support.
- Move from a land use system designed to restrict investment to one that mandates investment. We should be looking out 3-5 biennia, working on what our expected budget will be, then backing into the investments we will need to generate the revenue required to fund the state's expenditures. A growth mindset to fund expanding services.
- Create and fund a Department of Commerce to oversee the mandates to grow, review barriers to investment, and propose regulatory fixes to moderate overly restrictive policies.
- Properly zoned land, inside a UGB, should no longer be subject to additional state-level wetlands restrictions. The land has already gone through a public information process, elected leaders have weighed the trade-offs, and the state has an opportunity to weigh-in during the UGB expansion process. Once the land is part of the city's growth plan, the state cannot maintain additional land use restrictions.
- Expand funding for shovel-ready industrial and commercial land.
- Review rules and regulations to moderate state agencies.
- Reform prevailing wage requirements that discourage public-private investment.
- Regain our focus on being a world leader in low-cost energy.
- Establish a sunset for administrative rules and programs, requiring a thorough review of the cost and benefits before renewal.
- Undergo a comprehensive tax reform process. We cannot continue to push away capital by maintaining the highest income and estate taxes.
- Preempt local jurisdictions from raising taxes, already preempted at the state level, by calling them licenses or fees.

- Overhaul our K-12 system to improve our 4th and 8th grade reading, math and science scores so that families are proud to move to Oregon rather than questioning if they are sacrificing their children’s future by livinWith appreciation,

Jordan Papé

CEO, The Papé Group

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April 2, 2026

To: **Members of Governor Kotek's Prosperity Council**
Fr: **Oregon Business & Industry**
Re: **Recommendations**

Oregon Business & Industry exists to strengthen Oregon's economy in order to achieve a healthy, prosperous and competitive Oregon for the benefit of present and future generations.

This is OBI's mission statement — words carefully chosen by business leaders from across the state to reflect a vision of shared success and a state where employers and employees can thrive and flourish. That "prosperity" has entered a more common political vernacular in Oregon is welcome to OBI. But we will also be the first to say that words are nothing without action.

We want to help and are grateful for the opportunity to submit these recommendations for action to the Governor's Prosperity Council. In compiling them, we used the same principles of pragmatism, boldness and data-driven analysis that drive the rest of our work. We did not shy away from ideas just because they are hard, nor did we include things to be gratuitously provocative.

The reality is that the problems with Oregon's business climate and economy are deep, systemic and multifaceted. There is no silver bullet to restoring Oregon's business climate or regaining national competitiveness. There is no cure that will reverse trends and outcomes overnight. But there is a mix of things – some small, some large; some quick, some long-term; some executive, some legislative – that must be done. The work before the governor, her executive branch policymakers and legislators is complicated and important. It is also timely. Every month, session, year or biennium wasted without taking steps to economic recovery sets us back further, especially in a competitive landscape where other states are aggressively figuring out how to win.

Our recommendations are organized by core principles we believe the council should consider. Behind each we indicate which of the council's strategic goals[1] are advanced (B=Business Climate, W=Workforce, T=Tools for Growth). There are many ideas from OBI's Oregon Competitiveness Agenda[2] not included here. That does not mean they are less important or less impactful; we simply tried to focus on higher level issues and pare down the list for submission. We encourage those who have not yet done so to read the Agenda as well as The Oregon Scorecard[3], which includes myriad data underscoring the urgency of this work.

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[1] https://www.oregon.gov/gov/policies/Pages/Prosperity-Council.aspx
[2] https://oregonbusinessindustry.com/obi-releases-oregon-competitiveness-agenda/
[3] https://oregonbusinessindustry.com/oregonscorecard/

The bottom line is that unless Oregon strengthens its business climate through a more predictable and stable regulatory environment, manageable cost structures and balanced legislative and policymaking approaches, we risk continued distress. Greater prosperity requires a healthy private sector.

Thank you for your service on the council. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Avoid laws and regulations that make Oregon a policy outlier and harm the state's competitiveness, whether in establishing new policies or evaluating and modernizing existing ones.

- ✓ Replace Oregon's unique Climate Protection Program with a market-based program that allows for legislative oversight and linkage with other states, invests related revenue in prioritized state policies related to GHG reduction (e.g., wildfire mitigation, transportation congestion relief, industrial equipment upgrades) and avoids duplicative or overlapping regulation of GHGs. [B,W]
- ✓ Redesign Oregon's Recycling Modernization Act to ensure it is constitutional, fair and transparent to regulated entities and consumers; to align costs with outcomes; and to align systems and costs with other programs. [B]
- ✓ Engage in a thorough review of Oregon's unique, 50+ year old land use system with recommendations for modernization due to the Legislature for the 2029 session. Attention should be paid to industrial, housing and energy needs; improving the appeals process; creating more flexibility for the addition of land into UGBs or land swaps supported by local communities; and updating goals to reflect modern realities and needs. [B,T]
- ✓ Require summaries of proposed policies or policy revisions (statutes *and* administrative rules) to include comparative information about whether the proposal exists in other states, outcomes data if it does, how Oregon's proposal aligns with or deviates from such policies and how those deviations are in the best interest of Oregonians. [B]
- ✓ Task agencies with reviewing existing administrative rules to identify Oregon-specific approaches that result in layered, complex and costly regulatory requirements and then update those for increased efficacy, efficiency and alignment with national norms and best practices. [B]
- ✓ Update Oregon's unique laws and regulations relating to pay equity and non-disclosure agreements to align with other states' approaches. [B,W,T]
- ✓ Dissolve the Universal Health Plan Governance Board and reject the effort to establish a unique single payer program. [B,W]

Make Oregon a more affordable place to live, work and run a business.

(Many of the proposals in support of other principles will help realize this, but there are specific cost-alleviating measures policymakers can take.)

- ✓ Modernize the Corporate Activity Tax (CAT) by increasing the threshold and indexing it to inflation, lowering the rate to a level like the few other states with gross receipts taxes and increasing deductibility to minimize the effects of compounding on consumers and Oregon businesses, particularly manufacturers. [B]

- ✓ Index Oregon's personal income tax rates to avoid bracket creep. [B,W]
- ✓ Reform prevailing wage laws to encourage public-private investment in housing and other essential development needs. [B,W,T]
- ✓ Create regionally appropriate policies that allow for expanded access to affordable child care, including credits or incentives for employers that participate in cost-sharing programs. [B,W,T]
- ✓ Maintain current connections to federal taxable income and reconnect to the provisions from which it has disconnected, especially small business deduction (section 199A), bonus depreciation (section 168) and qualified small business stocks (section 1202). [B,T]
- ✓ Incentivize public-private partnerships for workforce training and development, such as expanded on the job training and education opportunities and employer workforce training credits or incentives. [B,W,T]
- ✓ Streamline permitting and other regulatory barriers to housing development to ensure communities can create enough differentiated housing stock at affordable prices. [B,W]
- ✓ Eliminate the estate tax. [B]
- ✓ Place a moratorium on the enforcement of OHA's Health Care Cost Growth Target program as well as policy-setting that increases the cost of health care insurance or delivery. [B,W]
- ✓ Preempt local income and payroll taxes to avoid multijurisdictional layering. [B,W]
- ✓ Expand Oregon's state and local tax (SALT) federal cap workaround so that it can be more widely used and make it permanent. [B,W]

Establish a culture of "yes" rather than "no" and reduce Oregon's overall regulatory burden while modernizing rulemaking processes and outcomes.

- ✓ Leadership at the top needs to help reset policymaking and enforcement culture to one of "yes", where supporting private sector health is a shared goal and operational expertise is respected. [B]
- ✓ Set a target of reducing regulations in Oregon by 20% by 2030 and create a mechanism to ensure streamlining going forward. [B]
- ✓ Establish a legislative committee to review proposed, sunsetting and existing agency rules to help ensure rules align with legislative intent, do not exceed agency authority and meet agreed upon outcomes and goals (ex: Washington's Joint Administrative Rules Review Committee). [B]
- ✓ Establish sunsets for all administrative rules and programs, requiring a thorough review of the contemporary need, costs, benefits and outcomes before renewal can be approved. [B]
- ✓ Bring Oregon in line with nearly every other state and the federal government by establishing an arbitrary and capricious or de novo standard for agency action, something Attorney General Rayfield has used in more than 30 lawsuits filed against the federal government. [B]
- ✓ Require a viability analysis for any proposed regulation to ensure that pending requirements are technologically and economically feasible and commercially available. [B]
- ✓ Require more robust fiscal and economic impact analyses, including analyses on likely costs to consumers and establish accountability measures for times when such analyses are not done. [B]

- ✓ Improve Oregon's occupational licensing requirements (currently the nation's most onerous) to better align with national norms. [B,W]
- ✓ Ensure balance of perspective, ideology and expertise to rulemaking so that regulations are driven by data and evidence, not politics. [B,T]
- ✓ Establish more customer service focused operations within agencies to help regulated entities comply and improve outcomes toward policy goals. (Ex: Department of Revenue's Office of the Taxpayer Advocate, Bureau of Labor and Industries' Employer Assistance program; Defunct Ex: Oregon OSHA's previous "safe harbor" support approach.) [B]
- ✓ Prevent informal and nonpublic policymaking by agency staff, such as the development of internal management directives, manuals, interpretations or other guidance that can change program requirements without public input or sometimes even awareness. [B]
- ✓ Complete the alignment of Oregon's disparate leave laws to reduce administrative burdens for employers, employees and the state. [B,W]
- ✓ Streamline Cleaner Air Oregon (CAO) by establishing a more reasonable scope, creating off ramps for facilities under certain risk thresholds (ex: Washington), standardizing facility evaluation processes and limiting data collection requirements to contaminants with EPA-established standards; pause current CAO Toxic Air Contaminant Review and Update rulemaking to allow for more rigorous scientific review. [B]
- ✓ Repeal agricultural and manufacturing overtime laws, which place artificial constraints on workers' earning capacity and employers' ability to meet production demand fluctuations, particularly those tied to harvesting crops or other seasonally specific demands. [B,W]
- ✓ Adjust regulatory approaches to incentivize desirable outcomes by rewarding excellence while spotlighting needed improvements (i.e., more carrots, not just sticks), such as dynamic inspection programs. (Prior OR ex: pollution control tax credit, green permitting program.) [B,T]
- ✓ Improve permitting for new applications, renewals and modifications through: [B]
  - Better inter-agency coordination, including between local and state jurisdictions;
  - Consistent, public and reasonable timelines for agency action, with fee refunds to applicants if agency deadlines are missed;
  - Ending moving-target permitting, where goalposts change during a permitting process;
  - Publicly posted assessments measuring agency performance and progress toward measurable outcomes; and,
  - An external audit of and improvement recommendations for underperforming permitting programs or those with significant permit backlogs.

Prioritize business and economic development through competitive retention, recruitment and long-term planning efforts in critical areas.

- ✓ Create a Department of Commerce to provide an overarching, consolidated structure for related functions currently split across multiple agencies; to oversee business support, development and related services; and to streamline and improve collaboration, dissemination and consistency of available information. [B,W,T]

- ✓ Establish, fund and routinely refresh a statewide economic development strategy—with a plan for execution—that leverages historical and traded sector strengths while also building a future-focused economy. [B,W,T]
- ✓ Enhance business support functions focused on the retention and growth of existing Oregon companies. [B,W,T]
- ✓ Establish a statewide energy strategy that balances the state's needs for energy generation, storage and transmission with a focus on affordability and reliability. [B,W,T]
- ✓ Working with industry experts and stakeholders, further develop and strengthen the statewide strategy for wildfire resiliency that includes a focus on creating healthier, productive and more resilient forests. [B]
- ✓ Ensure the state's business development agency can focus on this function without the distraction of myriad programmatic administration efforts. [B,T]
- ✓ Restore, even partially, Lottery funds once dedicated to economic development but since redirected to other programs (down to 25% from 100%). [B,T]
- ✓ Invest in the Strategic Investment Fund at competitive levels. [B,W,T]
- ✓ Establish and make permanent commonly used tax credits and investment opportunities to help drive economic activity, ultimately resulting in economic ROI. (Ex: permanent and expanded R&D tax credit, capital equipment credits or exemptions, broadly available and easy to use job tax credit that encourages retention and growth.) [B,W,T]
- ✓ Make Enterprise Zone policy permanent and ensure Oregon's Opportunity Zones are truly statewide so that communities across the state can benefit from them. [B,W,T]

Ensure a sustainable state budget focused on providing Oregonians with outcomes commensurate with the investments made by state government.

- ✓ Engage in holistic tax reform that analyzes impacts of various taxes and structures on economic growth and private sector job creation, affordability, fiscal sustainability and the relationship between local and state tax policy. [B,W,T]
- ✓ Connect allowable state budget growth to an economic growth measurement, such as GDP. [B,W]
- ✓ Use one-time money only for one-time programs. [B,W]
- ✓ Avoid expanding one-off revenue schemes that increase Other Fund revenue for the purpose of offloading General Fund obligations. [B,W]
- ✓ Transition from current service level assumptions to zero-based budgeting to ensure proper analysis of needs, growth and outcomes. [B,W]
- ✓ Working with national experts, establish actionable K-12 education outcome metrics and goals, then hold the department and districts accountable for those outcomes. [B,W]
- ✓ Consolidate and strengthen workforce development through a coordinated approach that builds upon successful regional efforts but contains focused state leadership rather than just a haphazard distribution of funding. [B,W]
- ✓ Require 10-year (five-biennia) budget forecasting as part of the agency request process, the governor's recommended budget proposal and the legislative budget-setting process. While not binding, this will inform legislators about anticipated needs and cost escalations. [B,W]

April 4, 2026

To: Prosperity.Roadmap@oregon.gov

Cc: Governor Kotek

From: Jacqueline Danos, resident Yachats, Oregon

Dear Members of the Council,

For decades GDP has been used as the benchmark for economic growth and prosperity. Wiser ways to look at prosperity exist and, in my opinion, Oregon would benefit moving in those wiser directions. Slow and steady beats fast and hectic every time. Focusing on one or two large industries such as tech and corporate farming, which might bring some jobs and economic benefit, have lasting detrimental environmental effects.

Communities across this country have suffered through catastrophic economic downturns due to the collapse of a single economic driver. They have suffered environmental pollution and increased health problems and watched as these same corporations receive millions of dollars in incentives to build or come to a state.

There is a better way.

Oregon has been able to save its agricultural lands, beaches and forests. These lands, once destroyed through overdevelopment and pollution, cannot be recovered. Just look across the country in places where development has taken over these precious natural resources.

Oregon's Prosperity Council would do better investing in our people through tax incentives and financial support strengthening K-12 schools, universities and colleges, and small business incubators. We should be helping entrepreneurs develop new ways to sustainably cultivate Oregon's resources and keep the businesses and their financial benefits locally. Examples of these kinds of entrepreneurial endeavors can be seen in the Central Coast Food Web in Newport, Oo-Nee Sea Ranch, the growing farm to fiber networks throughout the state, and Sustainable Northwest Wood to name just a few. These are industries that grow local jobs and economies without destroying the lands Oregon has worked so hard to save.

Smaller family farms have been the backbone of Oregon. The movement towards regenerative farming and organic systems should be viewed as an economic driver and worth investing in and supporting, in turn growing local economies through environmentally beneficial practices. Investing locally keeps the financial benefit within the state rather than seeing most earnings go to benefit corporate headquarters located far from Oregon.

Oregon’s Urban Growth Boundaries and the work of the Department of Land Conservation and Development foreshadowed what places around the country have come to see and do themselves. Building housing where jobs and transportation are located is integral to not only saving valuable agricultural lands but creates places, like Oregon, where tourism and the outdoor industry have grown to outweigh previous economic foundations of extractive industries such as timber.

Chasing large corporations and de-funding our educational system is a race to the bottom. Oregon might see a short-term bump in its economy, but it will then see a long-term decline in livability. Investing in our people, through locally built, locally derived, and local environmentally beneficial prosperity would make Oregon a leader once again in creating a state where people want to live because their quality of life is not only about GDP but about health, happiness, and communities. Oregon would be creating a sustainable and resilient place as we navigate these incredibly challenging times.

Please, re-think what prosperity means. To most people prosperity includes a strong community, a healthy place to live, and a lifestyle that includes the great outdoors. Oregon has worked to build that. We need to continue the work started 50 years ago and strengthen it. We should not be fooled into believing the values of protecting lands and local businesses is not as beneficial as jumping on the newest trend in economic development.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Danos
Yachats, Oregon

2843 NW Lolo Drive., Ste. 200 | Bend, OR 97703
Phone (541) 647-2930
www.colw.org

April 7, 2026

sent via email: Prosperity.Roadmap@oregon.gov, tim.knopp@oregon.gov

Governor's Prosperity Council
Tim Knopp, Chief Prosperity Officer
Office of Governor Tina Kotek, State of Oregon
900 Court Street, Suite 254
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Co-Chair James, Co-Chair Robinhold, Prosperity Council members, and Mr. Knopp,

As this Council creates recommendations for Governor Kotek's consideration to accelerate Oregon's economy, create good-paying jobs, and recruit and grow Oregon's businesses, we look forward to engaging and working together to help ensure all Oregonians have the opportunity to thrive.

It will be essential in the work ahead to recognize that **Oregon's land use program is part of the bedrock foundation upon which our economic vitality is built.**

Oregon Land Use: At the heart of Oregon's 'second paycheck.'
For more than 50 years, Oregon's land use program has been at the heart of creating the world-renowned quality of life that sets our state apart.[1] It has focused development in cities and towns, corralled rural sprawl, and preserved working farms, forests, wild places, and open space.

As noted in Governor Kotek's Prosperity Roadmap, "Our exceptional quality of life…makes [Oregon] not only a smart place to do business but also a desirable place to live, work, and raise a family."

For over 50 years, Oregon's land use program has proven its durability and flexibility, evolving to safeguard the state's exceptional quality of life. Today, that adaptability is being put to work to address some of the state's most pressing economic headwinds: the affordable housing shortage and wildfire risk.

The program is already delivering results on these issues through significant reforms, such as the Oregon Housing Needs Analysis (OHNA).[2] Finalized in December 2025, these landmark changes to Oregon's housing goal will provide more abundant and affordable housing across Oregon's communities as they are implemented this year and

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[1]Oregon Values and Beliefs Center. Environment and Land Use – 2023 Typology Study Summary. OregonVBC.org. https://oregonvbc.org/environment-and-land-use/
[2] Oregon Adopts Landmark Housing Rules to Increase Production, Affordability, and Choice, DLCD, December 2025 https://content.govdelivery.com/accounts/ORDLCD/bulletins/3fe7815

beyond. Simultaneously, the land use program serves as a critical shield against climate-driven threats. By strategically limiting development in the wildland-urban interface, Oregon is effectively protecting both people and property from the increasing risk of catastrophic wildfire.[3]

Working farms and forests, intact landscapes, healthy waterways: Oregon's economic all-stars

To borrow an example from the sporting world, you don't bench your star players. And when it comes to Oregon's economy, working farms and forests, intact landscapes and healthy waterways have been and will continue to be essential VIPs that need to be prioritized.

Oregon's farmlands support an agricultural economy that contributes 13% of the state's gross product and produces more than $6.8 billion in agricultural commodities annually.[4] Our forestlands make Oregon the largest softwood lumber producer in the U.S.[5]

Further, the benefits and value of intact, functioning landscapes and waterways are significant, as recently highlighted in Governor Kotek's Executive Order No. 25-26 (October 2025), directing state agencies to take urgent action to promote the resilience of our communities and natural and working lands and waters. Outdoor recreation and related tourism spending top $16 billion in Oregon and support over 190,000 jobs.[6]

We urge this Council to keep these facts and this track record 'front and center' in the work ahead and, in doing so, ensure any forthcoming recommendations uphold the key pillars of Oregon's land use program. Our economy and the livability of our communities depend on its continued success.

Thank you for your service and consideration of these comments. We would welcome the opportunity to share more detailed insights and examples on the information included here with the Prosperity Council as you undertake this important work on behalf of Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Ben Gordon, Executive Director

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[3] Oregon's Land Use Law Creates Wildfire-Adapted Communities, Sightline Institue, 2023: https://www.sightline.org/2023/07/25/oregons-land-use-law-creates-wildfire-adapted-communities/

[4] Oregon Department of Agriculture. State of Oregon Agriculture: 2025 Report from the State Board of Agriculture. Oregon.gov. https://www.oregon.gov/ODA/Documents/Publications/Administration/BoardReport.pdf

[5] Business Oregon. Forestry & Wood Products – Target Industries. Oregon.gov. https://www.oregon.gov/biz/programs/homeareas/byboregon/targetindustries/pages/forestry.aspx

[6] Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon: 2022 Update, Earth Economics. https://www.oregon.gov/oprd/PRP/Documents/2024.07.17%20Economic%20analysis%20of%20outdoor%20recreation%20in%20OR%20-%202022%20update.pdf

Governor Kotek's Economic Prosperity Council

The High Road to Prosperity for All Oregonians

April 7, 2026

Presented by:

Alice Dale
Labor Consultant, SEIU

Robert Camarillo
Executive Secretary, Oregon State Building & Construction Trades Council

Contributors:

Joe Cortright, Chuck Sheketoff, Lynn-Marie Crider, Barbara Dudley

The High Road to Prosperity for All Oregonians

Executive Summary

The Prosperity Council is at a crossroads: it must choose between taking the high or low road to improved prosperity. We choose the high road - A Roadmap for Oregon Prosperity that has first and foremost the goal of improving per capita income and improving the lives of low- and moderate-income Oregonians.

Focusing on merely growing the economy, reducing taxes on the highest income earners or businesses, or relying on flawed business climate rankings, which are often biased and unreliable indicators of a state's economic prosperity, miss the mark. It is the adequacy of our tax system, not Oregon's tax ranking, that should matter most to policymakers, business leaders, and other Oregonians.

A highly educated and trained workforce is the single most powerful economic lever for increasing incomes. This starts with a sustainable education funding infrastructure. From childcare to early learning and preschool programs, from K-12 to apprenticeships and vocational training and community colleges, to institutions of higher education, the high road approach to economic development relies on shoring up multiple pathways to financial stability.

Notably, and to some frighteningly, the Governor's Prosperity Roadmap was silent about artificial intelligence (AI). Oregon needs guardrails and worker-centered policies on artificial intelligence so that AI supports increased productivity while supporting job security and job upskilling, not marginalizing and replacing workers.

Oregon's net positive migration of firms shows that business relocation has little to do with alleged poor business climate. The "doom loop" narrative, widely embraced by the business community, fails to stand up to the economic data.

Tax expenditures – giveaways by state and local governments that must be made up by other taxpayers or result in diminished funds for public structures such as infrastructure, education and health care – generally do not drive business decisions. Despite their aggregate high cost to taxpayers, the State has failed to seriously evaluate its tax expenditures for business recruitment to justify their costs to taxpayers and their impact on other state priorities.

Just like any smart CEO, Oregon should pursue a strategy of its own and ignore the low road of doing everything other states do, just more cheaply. Oregon should build on Oregon's strengths, especially its unparalleled quality of life, and appeal to the smartest, hardest working, best-educated workers and the most innovative firms to help us build a high-skill, high-wage, high quality of life economy in the knowledge-driven world of the 21st century.

Introduction

The Prosperity Council is at a crossroads: it must choose between taking the high or low road to improved prosperity. A Roadmap for Oregon Prosperity needs to have as its goal improving the income and lives of all Oregonians at every income level in every part of the state, with a particular emphasis on low- and middle-income Oregonians. Focusing on merely growing the economy fails to capture the whole picture.

A highly educated and trained workforce is the single most powerful economic lever for increasing incomes. This starts with a sustainable education funding infrastructure. From childcare and early learning and preschool programs to K-12 to apprenticeship and vocational training to community colleges to institutions of higher education, the high road approach to economic development relies on shoring up multiple pathways to financial stability.

It's easy to understand how some businesses are attracted to the idea of quantitative growth: more population equals more customers, more sales, and more profit. But to individual Oregonians, the size of the economy is secondary to the quality of the economy, particularly the quality of jobs.

The Council also needs to consider the adverse environment created by the Trump Administration which is taking a heavy toll on the country and on Oregon more than on many other states. Oregon is 1% of the national economy but highly dependent on exports and a state which has stood up for democratic values in the face of intense national pressure to do otherwise.

The five foundations that have underpinned US economic success for decades are under assault: trade, immigration, science, education and the rule of law. Having each of these foundations under assault has created a hostile economic environment for Oregon: increasing and erratic tariffs, draconian immigration enforcement, a national assault on education and science, significant threats to severely dismantle core public services (many privately provided), and a disregard for the rule of law. Oregon needs to position itself now for the day when a new administration, supportive of democratic values, and which defends and enhances these five foundations, is in office.

Why The High Road?

Professional economic developers know that growth for growth's sake makes little sense. Camoin & Associates, a leading economic development consultancy, reported in February 2026:

> ". . .[T]he field [of economic development] has shown a persistent tendency to equate activity with impact. Projects are announced, incentives negotiated, and capital investment tallied, each serving as visible markers of momentum. Far less attention is given to what follows: whether the jobs endure, whether opportunity broadens, and whether the investment meaningfully alters a community's long-term trajectory.

> "Part of this dynamic reflects the frameworks that have long guided the profession. Return-on-investment models, while useful, tend to favor what can be readily counted (estimated tax revenue) over what must be cultivated over time. Political and market cycles reward visible wins, often on compressed timelines, while the deeper work of expanding opportunity and strengthening regional competitiveness unfolds more gradually. The result is a system that can favor the immediate over the enduring, even when long-term prosperity is the stated objective."

This perspective has been well-established for years, nationally and in Oregon. In 2007, the Oregon Business Council published the [2007 Oregon Business Plan which said:]

> The Vision Is Critical:
>
> "For its companies and its economy to compete effectively in the global marketplace, Oregon must ramp its education achievement and workforce preparation to unprecedented levels – specifically, 20-40-40. Twenty percent of Oregonians should have no less than a high school diploma as their highest level of attainment; 40 percent should have an associate's degree or equivalent certification as their highest attainment; and the remaining 40 percent should have a bachelor's degree, including at least 20 percent who also have a graduate degree. Statistically, a portion of this achievement will come from newcomers, but Oregon will have to meet most of this high standard in the education it provides its own citizens. The stakes could not be clearer. Low-paying jobs will not support families or the Oregon economy. Increasingly, both low- and medium-paying manufacturing jobs, and even many service jobs, are going offshore or falling to automation. All jobs that pay well increasingly require higher levels of education and work readiness."

The Oregon Legislature adopted the 40/40/20 vision (now listed in reverse order) as official state policy in 2011. The law – ORS 350.014, still on the books – called for achieving that vision by 2025. Oregon, however, only half-heartedly worked toward meeting these goals. The Legislature scaled back on higher education funding. From 1980 through 2021, tuition per FTE increased from $2,749 to $9,954 per year, a 3.6-fold increase after adjusting for inflation. The impact is clear.
.
A high road strategy, which builds on Oregon's distinctive strengths, has always stood Oregon in good stead. It was the right strategy in 2007 and it is the right strategy in 2026. We have repeatedly weathered national economic cycles, and as the US economy recovered, Oregon has outperformed the nation, not by compromising our uniqueness and commitment to quality of life and public services, but by building on those to improve our economy.

The world of economic development has changed; today, firms follow talent. Because of Oregon's relatively high level of worker skills and education, coupled with our attractiveness to smart young workers, people (and then businesses) came here and stayed; because it was different and better, not necessarily cheaper. As the state's economic development slogan of the mid-90s, devised by Oregon's local marketing geniuses Weiden+Kennedy, put it: "Things look different here." More than a slogan, Oregon's distinctive natural beauty, and Portland's dynamic urban environment helped attract a continual flow of talented and entrepreneurial migrants that both fueled the growth of existing firms and led to the formation of many new businesses.

The State of Oregon’s Economy

Economic climate indicators show Oregon’s metro areas are performing well

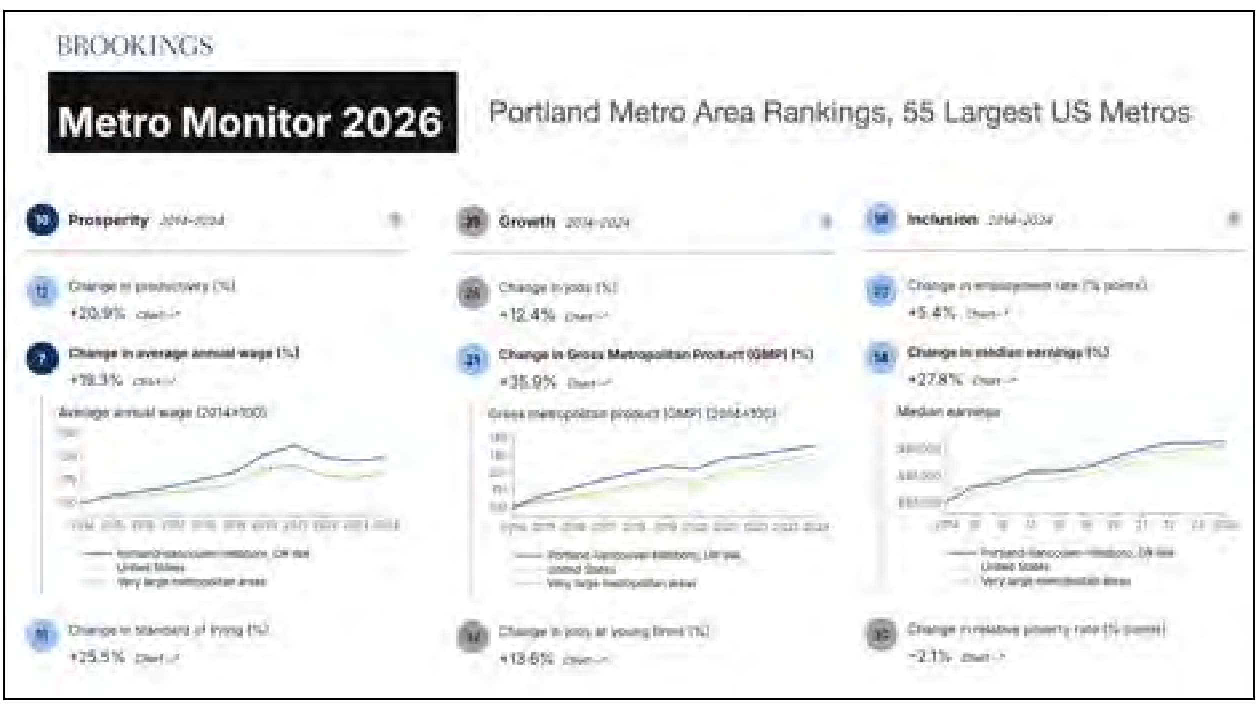
Contrary to the Portland area “doom loop” narrative that the business community has embraced, economic rankings prepared by the independent and respected Brookings Institution show that the Portland Metropolitan area and the state’s other metro areas perform well above the US average in prosperity, growth, and inclusion. Prosperity in the Brookings data is driven by three measures: productivity (which is the foundation of incomes), growth in average wages, and, improvements in the standard of living.

The latest version of the [Brookings Metro Monitor](), released in March 2026 shows:

- Portland ranks tenth overall in prosperity among large US metro areas, led by the seventh fastest growth in average annual wages over the past decade according to Brookings tabulations. Portland also had the 12th fastest increase in productivity and the 16th largest improvement in the standard of living over that time period. Distributional issues are addressed more specifically in the "inclusion" measures including median earnings growth and the change in the poverty rate.

- Portland also ranks in the top third of large metro areas, 18th overall in measures of inclusion, led by the 14th fastest improvement in median earnings over the past decade. While “inclusion” seems to generate controversy in some contexts, it shouldn’t here: this indicator measures whether the economy works for all parts of the economic spectrum.

- Even Portland’s aggregate economic growth is faster than the average for all large US metro areas. The region’s Gross Metropolitan Product, the aggregate value of output, rose faster than the nation and all but 20 other metro areas.



Oregon’s three mid-sized metropolitan areas also rank well above average in their economic performance according to the Brookings Metro Monitor. Salem, Eugene-Springfield, and Bend are among 85 US metro areas with populations between 250,000 and 500,000. Bend ranks first in prosperity and growth of these areas, Salem ranks fourth in prosperity and seventh in growth, and Eugene is twelfth for prosperity, and 30th for growth. All these cities also rank in the top fifth of all metro areas for inclusion.

Aggregate growth and productivity, as measured by real output, or Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has not been Oregon's problem. Portland ranks 12th in productivity, and above average in GDP growth, among large metro areas. Bend ranks first in GDP growth and productivity of mid-sized metro areas, and both Salem and Eugene-Springfield are above average. Statewide, Oregon's GDP per worker has increased faster than in the rest of the country for the past quarter century. Oregon's big challenge today is to make sure that this economy contributes to the prosperity of all Oregonians, particularly low- and middle-income earners.

Systemic social problems persist

The encouraging picture of Oregon's economy is not intended to imply that the status quo is adequate. Oregon faces a myriad of challenges, including job losses in 2025. Two of the Portland area's largest companies, Intel and Nike, experienced very poor years, directly laying off more than five thousand workers. Additionally, as with many states across the country, Oregon is struggling with how to assist the unhoused population, how to expand affordable housing, how to create an effective mental health care system, and how to streamline permitting.

The Oregon Business Council (OBC) is correct in telling the Council that there is a need for more affordable housing, adequate funding for K-12 education, pre-school and childcare, and a streamlined regulatory system. While other groups may be grappling with solutions to these serious community problems, the Council should still consider these in its deliberations.

Improving housing affordability requires building more places to live. Zoning codes for dense urban housing, ADUs and other options can maximize land use for residential purposes. Effectively dealing with drug, alcohol and mental health problems requires increased effectiveness and funding of social service agencies.

Similarly, lingering effects of the pandemic have taken a toll on our reputation, with media stories about "war torn" Portland, ongoing employer telecommuting policies, and high vacancy rates in downtown Portland commercial office space.

These problems are complex and the solutions are not easy, but there are reasons to be hopeful. Downtown Portland is coming back. Progress is being made in efforts to expand housing accessible to many more of our neighbors. Oregonians' resistance to the draconian immigrant deportation policies currently in place have re-established it as a state determined to protect civil liberties.

As the NYT reported on March 25, 2026, "Living in Portland, Ore.: Weird, but Life Is Good."

> "Beyond its well-known quirkiness and activism, it is a city designed for leisure, with access to nature and a high quality of life. "I think Portland has a P.R. problem," said Pamela Baker-Miller, owner of Frances May, the boutique she opened in the city's downtown 18 years ago. "Portland is a really special place to live and it's a really amazing place to start a business."[1]

[1] https://www.nytimes.com/2026/03/25/realestate/portland-ore-weird-but-life-is-good.html

Centering Low- & Middle-Income Oregonians

The Governor's and Legislature's number one goal should be raising incomes for lower and middle-income Oregon residents, not simply increasing the number of jobs or the size of the economy. Oregon has been a leader in raising the minimum wage to help those at the bottom and has adopted and improved an Earned Income Tax Credit that primarily helps low-income working households with children. This provides the state with a competitive advantage as workers above the minimum wage have also benefitted by the floor being raised.

Since 2005, Oregon has had among the highest minimum wages in the US, and this has played a key role in increasing average wages paid to lower wage workers. Since 2008, wages for Oregon's low-wage and middle-wage workers have substantially outpaced those for the rest of the United States.

In 2008, wages for Oregon workers earning the median hourly wage and wages for the lowest paid ten percent of workers (the tenth percentile) were roughly equal to the national average. Since then, adjusted for inflation, Oregon wages at the tenth percentile have grown much faster than for the United States as a whole (37 percent vs. 29 percent), and wages at the median have also grown faster (24 percent vs. 16 percent).

Oregon Raises the Minimum Wage and
Wage Growth Outpaces the National Average

OREGON	**2008**	**2025**	**Increase**
Median Worker	$22.18	$27.50	24%
Tenth Percentile (Low wage)	$11.73	$16.03	37%
UNITED STATES	**2008**	**2025**	**Increase**
Median Worker	$22.16	$25.67	16%
Tenth Percentile (Low wage)	$11.27	$14.56	29%

Source: Economic Policy Institute, Bureau of Labor Statistics data

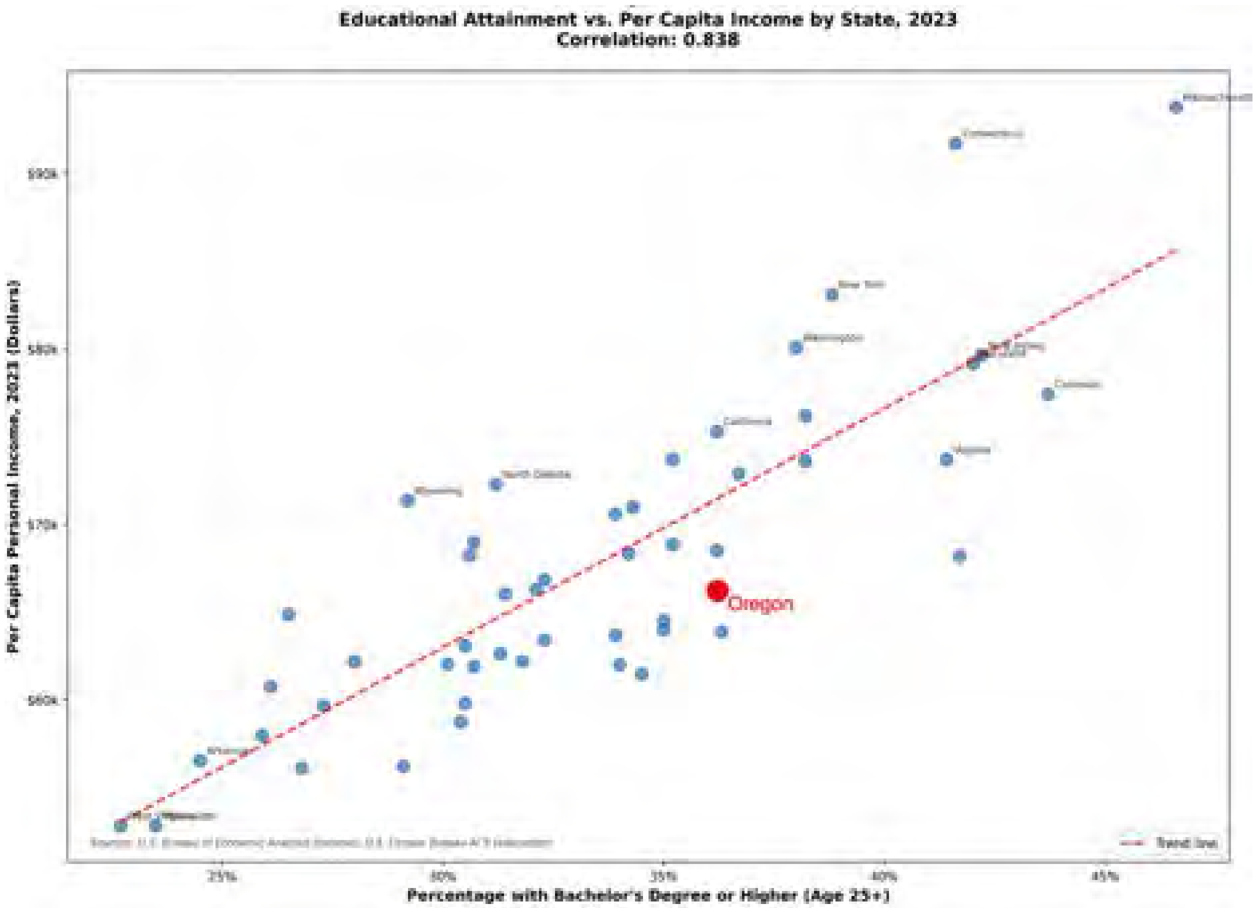
This improvement in wages, which occurred as Oregon steadily increased minimum wages, helped improve the overall equity of the Oregon economy, compared to other states. Strategically raising the incomes of low- and middle-income households is key to making housing affordable.

Building Out the Workforce

A highly skilled and educated workforce is the single most powerful economic lever for increasing incomes for low- and moderate-income Oregonians

The single most critical factor linked to higher incomes is increasing skills and education. States with well-educated and well-trained populations have high incomes; states with lower educational attainment have lower incomes. In fact, the fraction of the adult population with a four-year college degree statistically explains seventy percent (70%) of the variation in per capita income across the 50 states.

The following data chart ought to be top of mind for everyone who says they care about their state's economic success. It's this chart that shows the statistical relationship between education and per capita income for the 50 US states.[2]



Education has always been a key determinant of income, and that relationship has become even stronger in the past several decades as we've shifted increasingly to a knowledge-based economy. This correlation applies to all forms of post-high school education and skill upgrading. For example, Abt Associates and the Urban Institute found that completion of a certified apprenticeship program increases earnings by 49%, regardless of occupational sector and demographics. All education improves productivity and earnings.[3]

Not many years ago, working people moved to where the jobs are. Now, overwhelmingly, businesses move to places that have lots of talented workers and to which it is easy to attract

[2] Income data from US Bureau of Economic Analysis; education attainment data from US Census Bureau, 2023

[3] https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/registered-apprenticeships-can-increase-earning-not-enough-people-know

more. Smaller or start-up tech firms are competing with established behemoths for the same workers. As one Oregon technology startup CEO told a legislative study group[4]

> “I am here today advocating on behalf of my employees. I am competing with companies like Google and cities all over the world to retain my highly skilled workforce. A big factor in our favor is the perceived quality of life here in Oregon. Yet when they have children they encounter an underfunded school system combined with a reluctance to consider anything beyond spending cuts to solve the myriad problems. It’s not as if I don’t pay them enough so that they couldn't send their kids to private school. But they do not want to send their kids to private schools. They want to live in a community which adequately invests in education and other critical services.
>
> And that’s not what’s been happening. In response I've lost staff to places like London, Austin, Berlin and Helsinki, drawn by a higher quality of life, which public education is a big part of.
>
> * * * *
> If you want to foster a vibrant tech industry in this state and the well paid jobs that come with it then you will have to make the necessary investments, starting with an appropriately funded education system.”

Business recruiters say workforce is the number one location factor. The most important strategies for economic success focus on education and building a quality of life that retains and attracts talented workers.

High-skilled workers and highly productive, high-wage firms are gravitating towards places with a great quality of life and excellent public services, especially education. And, all levels of education are critical, preschool through higher education. This is the path Oregon needs to invest in – not just write this into business strategy documents and the law – but to actually invest more resources in education. This type of investment does not show immediate improvements but it creates a lasting foundation with solid economic outcomes.

Childcare and preschool

Although it is not always included in conversations about education and workforce, access to high-quality childcare is integral both to child development and to parents staying-in or returning-to the workforce. In Oregon, there is an estimated 35% gap in available childcare versus the potential need. And, the average annual cost is between $15,000 and $19,000 per year for one child. Without investment in this system, low and moderate wage earners can be priced out of the workforce.

Preschool for All prepares children for kindergarten by increasing their confidence and preparation. It reduces family financial stress, supports special care for children with disabilities and increases wages for preschool educators. There is a lot of evidence that universal Pre-K has huge economic paybacks, especially for disadvantaged families. This is an economic strategy that benefits children, parents, schools, and the community.

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[4] Joint Committee On Tax Reform, Mat Ellis, Cloudability, memo dated Tuesday, June 13, 2017, available at https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qA5eKOCUuSBBYUOH8QmeURDDCDrNC37I/view?usp=sharing

Skilled trades registered apprenticeship programs

Affiliated unions of the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council have demonstrated decades of success in delivering high-quality registered apprenticeship programs. These programs provide on-the-job training for projects at every level from basic to highly technical while creating pathways to family wage careers that help to improve living standards throughout Oregon and Washington. Importantly, research shows that completing a union apprenticeship can be just as valuable as earning a four-year degree, while allowing skilled trades workers to "earn while they learn" and avoid student debt.

The Council should not recommend weakening apprenticeship standards by changing the ratios of apprentices to journey level workers or addressing reciprocity. Apprenticeship programs are within the jurisdiction of BOLI and the Apprenticeship and Training Council. They involve quality, worker safety and issues that this Council is not equipped to address.

Vocational and other apprenticeship programs

Community College Career and Technical Education (CET) Programs have expanded with an emphasis on strengthening industry-aligned, high wage and in-demand occupations. They currently focus on these program areas: agricultural sciences, business and management, health sciences, industrial and engineering systems. These efforts should be augmented by more business partnerships which include paid internship programs.

In health care, the Kaiser Permanente Labor-Management Partnership and the SEIU RISE Program are strong examples of successful labor-management training programs. The AFSCME-BOLI Behavioral Health Program (United We Heal) is another strong apprenticeship program with huge potential to provide much needed community services in the behavioral health field. And, it could do substantially more with even minimal increased funding.[5]

By combining course work and on-the-job training, these proven programs advance careers, deliver improved quality of care, and fill in-demand jobs needed by their partner companies. The state should consider, as a condition of offering business tax expenditures, that the recipient companies must provide career ladders with paid training and apprenticeship programs (using BOLI approved programs, where available, and local community college programs, particularly CTE programs, with annual accountability reports) to improve their employees' skills and thus wages and eligibility for higher level in-demand jobs in their companies or their industry.

Implement guardrails and worker-centered policies on artificial intelligence so that AI supports prosperity

Notably, Oregon's Prosperity Roadmap is silent about artificial intelligence (AI), despite its inevitable impact on the state's economy and workforce, which is already underway. Oregon could position itself as a leader in the nation in ensuring this technological advancement supports prosperity for all. AI has the potential to increase productivity and the potential to create opportunities for upskilling and job transitions that lead to better and higher paying jobs. It

[5] Kaiser Labor-Management Partnership: https://www.lmpartnership.org/about/how-partnership-works/what-is-partnership; SEIU RISE Partnership: https://www.risepartnership.com/our-programs/; AFSCME/BOLI, United We Heal: https://oregonuwh.org

also, of course, has the potential to wreak havoc on the workforce. It is essential that Oregon enacts AI policies that are stakeholder-informed, worker-centered, innovative, and unambiguous.

In Europe, legislative bodies and companies are having these discussions in concert with workforce organizations, but we have not seen a unified effort in the U.S. The greatest fear the public has about AI in the workplace is that it could cause a large number of job losses and marginalization of the workforce. With the economic fragility many U.S. workers already face just meeting their basic living expenses, these are important concerns that need to be addressed.

Further, across the country, 95% of workers in jobs likely to be impacted by AI are not represented by unions, which offer the best structure for facilitating candid exchanges of information in the workplace. Organized labor is skilled at identifying job training needs (including developing ongoing upskilling programs) and ensuring ownership of decision-making. Oregon must use this moment to strengthen, rather than weaken, all democratic institutions impacted by AI, in the workplace and as well as in society, and create an economy that benefits everyone.[6]

The AFL-CIO has adopted a set of principles for fair, safe, responsible, and worker-centered AI that could provide a good starting point for developing policies beneficial to workers and businesses.

In summary, Oregon needs to develop AI policies that have guardrails and baked-in transparency to engage and train workers. We can augment productivity and minimize layoffs by utilizing AI on-the-job upskilling programs.

Balancing a Healthy Business Climate with a Healthy Tax Infrastructure

There have been many references during Council meetings of a “need” to reduce the income tax on high-income Portlanders to attract CEOs and high paid employees. Similarly, the Corporate Activity Tax (CAT), which is dedicated to funding education, is disliked by businesses and a number of Council members have recommended it should be repealed.

There is no compelling evidence that Portland’s supplemental income taxes on the most affluent or the CAT undermine prosperity or that reducing those taxes will benefit the state. The CAT was promoted by Nike and is designed for the traded sector as out-of-state sales are not included in commercial activities subject to the tax. While there were 519,579 tax returns with business income filed in tax year 2022, there were only 26,569 CAT returns filed that year (about five percent).[7]

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[6] Christy Hoffman, UNI Global Union General Secretary, interview by Molly Kinder, July 16, 2025, Brookings Metro Blueprint, “Workers must have a seat at the AI bargaining table” https://www.brookings.edu/articles/molly-kinder-and-christy-hoffman-discuss-how-workers-can-shape-the-use-of-generative-ai-in-the-workplace/

[7] Oregon Public Finance, Basic Facts 2026, Legislative Revenue Office, Report #1-26, February 3, 2026 https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/lro/Documents/Basic%20Facts%202026.pdf

Taxes are not impeding businesses. State and local taxes are only about two percent of the cost of doing business. In spite of this low percentage, business climate rankings generally have at their core state tax levels as the main indicator of business climate.[8]

Additionally, the reality is that there is a limited number of tax options. Oregon has referred sales taxes and split-roll property taxes to the voters with resounding "no" votes. In the late 1990s, Oregon experimented with deferring capital gains taxes on selective "start ups" to encourage reinvestment in businesses and to increase job creations. The State's analysis of the effort concluded that it was a failure and so it was discontinued.[9] Oregon businesses have strongly and consistently opposed increasing state corporate income tax. While the CAT (a consumption tax) like all other taxes isn't perfect, it impacts only five percent of businesses and is traded-sector friendly by not including out-of-state activities in the definition of commercial activities.

Oregon's net positive migration of firms shows that business relocation has little to do with alleged poor business climate

The obsession with business climate builds upon and reinforces the false perception that interstate migration of businesses is a decisive factor shaping or measuring state prosperity. It is false for a variety of reasons. First, most businesses have only a single location, and employ people in a single state. Moreover, firms typically have compelling geographical, personal, and business reasons to locate where they do.

For decades, economic researchers have confirmed that it is the formation of new firms, and their growth and expansion that drives the growth of regional and state economies, not the migration of businesses from place to place.The challenge facing states is to foster the conditions where people can easily create, and readily grow their businesses. It makes no sense to contort public policies such as tax and land use laws to try to attract a firm that is simply shopping for the biggest subsidies or the lowest taxes.

Certainly, businesses decide to relocate for a variety of reasons but too often anecdotal examples, not statistics, drive the narrative. The number of business relocations are reliable indicators and they demonstrate that, while a business relocation can be a significant problem for a given employer, the number of relocations for Oregon, when matched up against other states across the country, indicate that Oregon is not an outlier.

The actual data on firms moving from state to state is tracked by the Bureau of Labor Statistics using addresses on tax records. Their analysis shows that very few firms ever move from one state to another. And, in contrast to the widely publicized complaints about firms leaving Oregon, the latest BLS data show that not only does Oregon have a net inflow of business moves, but it ranks 11th among the 50 states in net in-bound migration of businesses.[10]

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[8] Grading Places: What do Business Climate Rankings Really Tell Us, page 11 and note 11.

[9] https://www.ocpp.org/2000/01/21/no-special-treatment/

[10] Akbar Sadeghi, Kevin Cooksey, and Anthony Colavito,"Firm migrations in the United States: magnitude and trends," Monthly Labor Review, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, June 2023, https://doi.org/10.21916/mlr.2023.11

Oregon Enjoys a Healthy Net Migration of Firms		
Rank	**State**	**Firms**
1	Florida	399
2	North Carolina	148
3	Nevada	103
4	Texas	103
5	Tennessee	92
6	New Jersey	89
7	Idaho	68
8	South Carolina	58
9	Arizona	44
10	Michigan	40
11	**Oregon**	**35**
12	Connecticut	29
47	Maryland	-50
48	Illinois	-208
49	California	-456
50	New York	-487

Tax expenditures, including so-called tax incentives, are nice for business owners but do not consistently drive business location decisions

Tax expenditures are giveaways (e.g. credits, deductions, special treatment) by the state and local governments that must be made up by other taxpayers or result in diminished funds for public structures such as infrastructure, education, apprenticeship programs and health care.

When asked, corporate executives often claim that the critical step in economic development is lowering tax levels and increasing tax expenditures for businesses and their owners. And while states seem to fall all over themselves to offer tax dollars and gimmicks, there's precious little evidence that any of this actually makes much difference to industrial location or state economic prosperity.

The Upjohn Institute's Tim Bartik, the dean of American economic development researchers, concludes that 90 percent of tax incentives have no effect on firm location:[11]

> “[B]ased on the research evidence, incentives often do not tip firms’ decisions of where to locate. In 9 out 10 cases, firms are receiving a tax incentive for a location decision they would have made anyway, even if no incentive had been provided. As

[11] Timothy J. Bartik, Bringing Jobs to People: Improving Local Economic Development Policies, W.E. Upjohn Institute for Employment Research, August 2020.

> a result, incentives have high costs per local job they actually create and thus should receive less emphasis."

It isn't just researchers who have made the case that tax expenditures billed as incentives don't work or are not necessary. Highly respected business leaders have made this case over many years. For instance, Bush Administration Treasury Secretary and Alcoa CEO and Chairman, Paul O'Neill said:

> "I never made an investment decision based on the tax code… If you want to give me inducements for something I am going to do anyway, I will take it. But good business people do not do things because of inducements; they do it because they can see that they are going to be able to earn the cost of capital out of their own intelligence and organization of resources."[12]

Similarly, in Oregon, Mark Modjeski, tax director for Tektronix, our state's pioneering high tech company, when asked by an Oregon House Revenue Committee Co-Chair why a tax credit billed as an incentive made Tek's presence here more productive than it might otherwise be, Modjeski replied:[13]

> "I think that's a tough question, in all honesty. I mean, would Tektronix be doing anything different in its business if it did not have a credit on its books? I would say no. I'll be on record saying that."

This is a rare straight-forward and honest response by a major Oregon business leader which validates the research by publicly recognizing the small role tax policy plays in their business decisions.

Unfortunately, we have a system of cash prizes that encourage bad corporate citizenship. If a company does what makes most sense for its business, follows the rules, and pays its taxes, it gets nothing special. But if it threatens to locate elsewhere or to leave town, it can wrangle tax expenditures and subsidies.

When businesses are approaching state and local government officials looking to make a deal about locating facilities in Oregon, they know that public officials have few things in their cookie jars so they ask for those things. That focus on taxes as important by business is because only public officials can offer tax giveaways. Other more significant costs of conducting business like wages, health care costs, materials costs, cannot be impacted directly by those government officials. The anecdotal focus on taxes gives government officials the false sense that tax levels are important to the businesses' decisions.

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[12] Hearing before the Committee on Finance, United State Senate, 107th Congress, 1st Session, on the Anticipated Nomination of Paul O'Neill to Be Secretary of the Treasury, January 17, 2001, S. Hrg. 107-5

[13] Oregon House Committee on Revenue, April 2, 2015, video record at https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/mediaplayer/?clientID=4879615486&eventID=2015041067 at 21:27.

Business climate rankings are barely worth the paper they are printed on.

Business climate measures have always been a poor guide to building a stronger economy for everyone. Business climate rankings are negatively correlated with income levels, with high wage innovation-based industries, and quality of life. In effect, business climate measures treat a bad climate for workers as a good climate for business. Those calling on Oregon to focus on improving its rank on the CNBC business climate rating are asking Oregon to strive to be the “best” place in the US for an imaginary, generic business. Business climate rankings have no place in creating a plan for prosperity for all.

Today, even though state and local taxes are about two percent of the cost of doing business, business climate rankings generally have at their core state tax levels as the main indicator of business climate.[14] They rank lower tax states as having better business climates.

It wasn’t always that way. For instance, before the advent of the internet and the proliferation of rankings for advocacy purposes, Fortune magazine once identified Minneapolis-St Paul as one of the ten best cities for business, noting in a summary, “painfully high corporate and personal income taxes go for heavy expenditures on education, welfare, transportation, and parks. The system works.”[15] Fortune recognized the important role of public structures in creating a good business climate.

The CNBC and Tax Foundation reports presented to the Prosperity Council list states that follow the federal minimum wage of $7.25 per hour in roughly half the states ranking in their top 10 listings. Oregon cannot achieve its prosperity goal of creating family wage jobs by seeking to compete on wages with low minimum wage or anti-union states which only require businesses to pay workers half Oregon’s minimum wage rate and which offer workers substandard benefits. These comparisons make no sense for the purported workforce goals of the Council to create good paying jobs nor do they take into account the increased state spending required to subsidize low-wage workers’ living expenses (housing, food, medical) so businesses can earn higher profits at the expense of Oregon taxpayers.

Oregon isn't, and shouldn't try to be, the lowest cost, least restrictive location for any given business. Following the high road, it should be the premium location for the innovative people and businesses that want to compete at the high end of the economy.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Prosperity Council must choose to take the high road to prosperity. Oregon should build on its strengths to appeal to the smartest, hardest working, best-trained workers and the most innovative firms to help build a high-skill, high-wage, high-quality of life economy.

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[14] See https://www.goodjobsfirst.org/wp-content/uploads/docs/pdf/gradingplaces.pdf

[15] “Top Ten Cities for Business,” Fortune, October 22, 1990 See .https://drive.google.com/file/d/1JgXqfU4jC-fjkFMG12MzNrZjVwUE7nvw/view?usp=drivesdk

Oregon's Prosperity Roadmap should focus on continuing to build on its specific strengths and address known, universally agreed upon problems that hamper its future:

1. Set goals for per capita income growth (not GDP or job counts) as well as goals for reducing the seemingly endless widening of income and wealth inequality. Make improving wages for low- and middle-income workers an explicit target, and set goals for reducing poverty especially among the working poor.

2. Fully implement and fully fund the statutorially adopted 40/40/20 vision for education. Invest in education and training programs at every level, including ongoing upskilling to address industry changes.

3. Set goals for improving quality of life indicators that attract and retain talented workers, namely housing, healthcare, childcare, and public transportation.

4. As a condition of offering businesses tax expenditures, recipient companies must provide paid training, utilize existing state registered apprenticeship programs where they exist, to improve their employees' skills and eligibility for higher level in-demand careers in the skilled trades or their companies. These companies should also be required to ensure that Oregonians are prioritized when hiring and get paid a family sustaining wage and are provided with employer-paid family health insurance and any other components agencies deem important, and that labor standards apply when offering tax incentives.

5. While the Legislature now has a Joint Committee on Tax Expenditures, where each of these expenditures are reviewed for effectiveness every six years on a rotating basis (one third are reviewed each biennium), the Executive Branch ought to conduct an independent analysis to determine whether existing or new expenditures are actually essential and are worth the trade-off for other budget priorities that are proven to improve quality of life for Oregonians.

6. Protect investments in public structures that promote prosperity from misguided efforts to lower personal income taxes on those with the greatest ability to pay or to eliminate funding dedicated to education, such as the Corporate Activity Tax.

7. Develop AI policies with a strategy that includes guardrails, requires transparency, engages and trains workers, through on-the-job upskilling programs, to adapt to this key technological innovation so we can improve productivity while minimizing layoffs.

April 17, 2026

Oregon Prosperity Council,
Sent via: Prosperity.Roadmap@oregon.gov
Renée James, Co-Chair
Curtis Robinhold, Co-Chair

RE: Oregon Prosperity Roadmap

Dear Co-Chairs of the Oregon Prosperity Council,

Microsoft is pleased to express its strong support for the Oregon Prosperity Roadmap and its vision for building a more inclusive, innovative, and resilient state economy. The Roadmap's emphasis on education, workforce readiness, technology adoption, and cross-sector collaboration closely aligns with Microsoft's long-standing commitment to advancing economic opportunity through responsible technology, skilling, and public-private partnership and driving innovation in the age of AI.

Microsoft strongly supports the Roadmap's approach to economic development, including investments in digital infrastructure, entrepreneurship, and support for small and medium-sized businesses. Technology adoption and innovation—when paired with thoughtful policy and workforce alignment—can help communities modernize services, increase productivity, and compete globally.

As you will read, we outline ideas for how best to achieve this economic development approach through efforts including: accelerating research, supporting AI literacy, utilizing labor market data and preparing the workforce for AI-enabled jobs.

As Oregon leaders and citizens move forward with the Roadmap, Microsoft is offering the following programs and resources to help integrate AI opportunities that complement the ideas outlined in the Oregon Prosperity Roadmap. We would welcome the opportunity to meet, share these ideas, and discuss their relevance and potential application in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Hana Doubrava
Director, Cascadia
Microsoft Corporation

Cc'd: Emerald Bogue (emerald.bogue@portofportland.com), Harry Clapsis (harry@amperecomputing.com)

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Microsoft Recommendations for the Oregon Prosperity Roadmap in the Age of AI

RECOMMENDATION 1: ACCELERATE RESEARCH WITH AI AND ENABLE COLLABORATION FOR AI RESEARCH FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.

Create shared research infrastructure—secure cloud computing, governed data access, and common AI tools—that universities, startups, and industry can use to accelerate discovery and commercialization. Encourage cross-institutional consortia focused on Oregon priority sectors (e.g., semiconductors, clean energy, forestry, health, and advanced manufacturing) and lower barriers to partnering through streamlined agreements and clear IP pathways. Pair these efforts with responsible AI and cybersecurity guardrails to protect sensitive data and strengthen trust among collaborators.

- **Accelerate research and development through Microsoft Discovery.** Microsoft Discovery is an enterprise, agentic AI platform designed to accelerate research and development. Built on Azure, it enables universities, research institutions, and industry partners to use AI agents to accelerate scientific discovery, simulation, and innovation across fields such as materials science, energy, manufacturing, and life sciences.
- **Collaborate on AI Economy Research.** The AI Economy Institute is a Microsoft Research initiative focused on understanding AI's impact on jobs, skills, productivity, and education systems. AIEI produces evidence-based research to inform policymakers, educators, and workforce leaders as they adapt education and training systems for an AI-enabled economy.

RECOMMENDATION 2: SUPPORT AI LITERACY FOR STUDENTS AND PREPARE K-12 TEACHERS TO USE AND TEACH AI.

Embed age-appropriate AI literacy and responsible use expectations into standards, curriculum guidance, and digital citizenship. Pair this with sustained professional learning so educators can use AI to save time, personalize instruction, and teach students how to evaluate AI outputs, protect privacy, and use tools ethically.

- **Establish AI Literacy Standards in K12.** Microsoft supports state and local efforts to establish AI literacy standards for students, helping ensure young people understand how AI works, how it should be used responsibly, and how it impacts learning and work. For example, Idaho's work to create statewide AI literacy standards for K–12 students offers a replicable model for other states. And Code.org and Teach AI offer AI Literacy tools to for K-12.
- **Prepare Teachers to use AI.** Elevate for Educators provides free, on-demand professional learning to help teachers confidently and responsibly integrate AI into their classrooms. Resources focus on saving time, supporting instructional planning, enhancing student engagement, and building educator confidence with emerging technologies.
- **Personalize Special Education with AI.** Microsoft offers tailored AI training and resources to support special education teachers, helping them use AI tools to personalize instruction, improve accessibility, and reduce administrative workload—while keeping students and educators at the center of learning.

RECOMMENDATION 3: MONITOR AND USE OREGON LABOR MARKET DATA TO DRIVE RESULTS.

Establish a shared, statewide dashboard that blends traditional measures (employment, wages, openings) with real-time signals on in-demand skills and hiring trends. Use these insights to set clear targets, prioritize investments, and adjust programs quickly when conditions change across regions and industries. Relevant resources from Microsoft include:

- **Access Trends through Labor Market Data specific to Oregon.** Through LinkedIn's Economic Graph, we can provide labor market insights to help states, regions, and workforce boards understand in-demand skills, emerging occupations, and workforce trends. These insights inform education planning, workforce investment, and economic development strategies.

RECOMMENDATION 4: ENABLE WORKFORCE ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITY COLLEGES TO DELIVER AI TRAINING TO PREPARE THE WORKFORCE.

Equip workforce shared digital tools, and employer partnerships to scale short-term training tied to credentials and work-based learning. Align offerings to local demand using labor market data, and ensure wraparound supports (career navigation, childcare, transportation) so more Oregonians can complete training and transition into quality jobs.

- **Enable Workforce Boards with AI**. In partnership with the National Association of Workforce Boards (NAWB), Microsoft Elevate supports workforce boards and American Job Centers with AI and digital skills training for jobseekers, dislocated workers, and incumbent workers—aligning training with real labor market demand.
- **Deliver AI Training through Community Colleges.** In partnership with the American Association of Community Colleges, Microsoft offers training to community college leaders to help them build AI ready campuses.
- **Coming Soon: Enable In-demand Industries with AI (e.g., Construction)**. Microsoft supports targeted skilling and reskilling strategies for workers in industries experiencing disruption, such as construction, manufacturing, and logistics. AI-enabled tools and training can help workers transition into adjacent roles, improve safety and productivity, and access new career pathways.

EnergyTrust of Oregon

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Portland, OR 97204

1.866.368.7878
energytrust.org

To: Prosperity Council
From: Chris Lyons, Energy Trust of Oregon
Date: March 25, 2026
Re: Prosperity Council Survey

The following provides Energy Trust of Oregon's responses to Governor Kotek's Prosperity Council online survey that closed on Friday, March 20, 2026 and was originally accessed at https://www.research.net/survey-closed/?sm=6aN6_2FiXUT7Tt7B2unhuq12HZuc_2FGvNy_2Fu8L2SIQpGBc7xZUc_2BXv_2Bm2kR_2F05qQuSdUUgF6t7VpqEzYcFFwxiq8BE3PtFhb_2BAIwajr_2BdrDaD7j0EYN18AW53_2BqEXrHXLIwo9LJR0IMod7b8zjceqT6McDdN2pSibww7qnsUcBHhQU_3D. We regret that we missed the deadline and hope our feedback can be shared with and help inform the council's efforts to develop actionable steps to accelerate Oregon's economy, create good paying jobs, and recruit and grow Oregon's businesses. If you have any additional questions, please contact Chris Lyons, Sr. Government and Stakeholder Relations Manager, at 971-990-8008 or chris.lyons@energytrust.org.

Name (first and last)
Chris Lyons

Email address
chris.lyons@energytrust.org

*** What is your 5-digit zipcode?**
97204

Are you representing yourself or your organization/business?
Myself
Organization/Business
Both

Business/Organization Information
To better understand whose input we are receiving, please tell us more about your business or organization.

What business/organization are you representing?
Energy Trust of Oregon

Are you in the public or private sector?
Public
Private
Non-profit

What industry do you work in?
Metals and Machinery
Business and Professional Services

Food and Beverage
Forestry and Wood Products
Technology
Outdoor Gear and Apparel
Bioscience
Other (please specify)

- All industry types operating in Oregon and that are customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural, Cascade Natural Gas and Avista

What is your Oregon-based team's headcount?
1 - 20 people
21-100 people
101-500 people
500-1000 people
1000+ people
I don't know

Detailed Input on Focus Areas of Your Choosing
Please share specific challenges, needs, or solutions related to a specific focus area. You may submit as many ideas as you'd like.

Focus area you are providing input on
Business climate
Workforce
Tools for growth

What challenge would you like addressed in the Prosperity Council's recommendations? What is the biggest barrier or friction point in this area?
Energy Trust of Oregon is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people, businesses and communities thrive through clean, affordable energy. We offer information, technical studies, services and cash incentives to help more than 2.4 million customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural, Cascade Natural Gas and Avista in Oregon and Southwest Washington benefit from energy efficiency and renewable energy generation. This includes homeowners, renters, property owners and small to large businesses of all types, like commercial businesses, agricultural producers and manufacturers. We connect these customers to qualified contractors, and we provide these contractors with ongoing training and support.

The State of Oregon has set ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals for utilities by 2030 and beyond. To help utilities meet these goals as affordably as possible, Energy Trust has increased our own targets to significantly scale up cost-effective energy efficiency and small-scale renewable energy efforts, which will result in cost savings, improved comfort for residents and enhanced productivity for businesses.

As outlined in the Oregon Energy Strategy issued in November 2025 and embedded in Energy Trust's long-term planning, the energy industry workforce will need to evolve as the energy sector modernizes to meet Oregon's future energy needs and policy objectives. Investing in workforce development is critical to building a robust pipeline of qualified trades contractors, home energy auditors, designers, architects, engineers and other professionals who are equipped to design and implement clean energy solutions as the demand for energy upgrades increases.

However, there is an ongoing labor shortage of workers with the skills needed for energy efficiency and renewable energy work. A jobs analysis conducted for the Oregon Energy Strategy demonstrated a need for greater employment in several key occupations, including electricians and HVAC specialists. Expanding the number of qualified professionals who can complete projects is vital to accelerating energy savings and advancing Oregon's decarbonization goals. Investing in these sectors, job types and workers can further the state's economic prosperity goals, too.

Energy Trust has identified several challenges related to workforce development for energy efficiency and renewable energy work that we highlight for the Prosperity Council as it develops its recommendations for Governor Kotek. Overall, an ongoing need is state-led and statewide coordination among organizations, agencies and funders like Energy Trust that are focused on clean energy workforce development. There are several entities engaged in clean energy workforce development and supporting the implementation of statewide policies. Without a coordinated strategy and funding, it is challenging for these groups to partner with one another or tap into existing workforce infrastructure such as pre-apprenticeship programs, workforce development boards, funding mechanisms, small business administrations and local organizations. This makes it challenging to scale robust, impactful programs in all regions of the state. An example of a statewide effort seeking to bridge gaps and avoid duplication of efforts is the Oregon Clean Energy Workforce Coalition (OCEWC). The OCEWC is a nonprofit created by Portland General Electric in partnership with several organizations. Energy Trust is actively engaged with OCEWC to ensure we advance shared goals for statewide support for its clean energy workforce.

Other notable challenges are related to training and retention for the clean energy workforce. Bottlenecks around apprenticeship programs limit workforce development, as too few programs exist and the requirement that there is one journeyman for every apprentice (in carpentry and HVAC, in particular) slows the production of qualified workers and limits Energy Trust's ability to complete projects, save energy and generate clean power. In addition, there is an opportunity for pre-apprenticeship programs to more consistently connect graduates with employment opportunities. Workforce instability can also result from challenges retaining workers within the clean energy industry. In some regions, wages in the energy efficiency industry are less competitive, causing job seekers to choose to work outside of the industry.

These challenges are amplified in rural areas of Oregon. In some parts of the state, there is a lack of specialized workers, such as electricians and weatherization installers. This limits the implementation of cost-effective energy efficiency and renewable energy projects, as contractors must be brought in from outside of local communities, resulting in higher costs for travel, lodging and other logistical expenses and diverting funds outside of rural areas. There is also limited access to training and education programs in rural communities, including a lack of training providers, spaces for hands-on learning and training materials, making it difficult to build a local pipeline of qualified energy professionals.

What solution or specific change would you make?

Energy Trust suggests developing a statewide strategy for clean energy workforce development. This strategy could be state-developed and state-supported, providing uniform direction and shared goals to all key entities involved in clean energy workforce development: government agencies, local organizations, educational partners and funders.

As a part of this strategy, consistent, long-term funding to support community college apprenticeship and training programs, especially in rural areas, can make the training more accessible and sustainable. Training and education in energy efficiency equipment and solar technologies could be embedded within these programs to prepare the workforce for evolving needs in the energy efficiency industry. Consistent funding could help develop and scale training infrastructure in rural communities, including the permanent placement of training equipment and materials. The state could also support business incubation programming to help new small businesses provide energy efficiency and renewable energy services and grow to meet project demand.

What would success look like in 2–3 years?

In two to three years, success would look like establishment and active implementation of a state-led clean energy workforce development strategy, as outlined above. Training programs incorporating education in energy efficiency and solar would be well-funded and established across the state, including in rural communities, enabling a steady pipeline of skilled workers. Additionally, apprenticeship and training programs would partner with local businesses to ensure that, upon completion, workers are connected with employment opportunities within their communities.

Who has to act for this to happen? (i.e. legislature, local governments, employers, education/training partners, etc.)

To develop and implement a state-led clean energy workforce development strategy, there would need to be continued commitment by the state to meet energy goals as outlined in the Oregon Energy Strategy. Additionally, the Legislature would need to act to secure sustainable, long-term funding for clean energy workforce development, with a particular focus on supporting training programs integrating energy efficiency best practices and solar technology training into curricula. Applicable state agencies would need to coordinate with nonprofit and community-based organizations, utilities, community colleges and other partners to develop and implement a statewide clean energy workforce development strategy. Employers would need to partner with training providers and educational institutions to offer hands-on learning opportunities and commit to hiring program graduates.

What existing state programs and policies does Oregon have that are most helpful to you that you want to see continue?

What promising models or effective best practices have you seen in other states that you'd like Oregon to emulate?

New York's comprehensive, accessible website demonstrates how an integrated state system can guide and connect the many players in the energy efficiency landscape, making it easier for businesses, training partners and workers to collaborate.

* Do you have another focus area you would like to provide input on?

Yes
No

Additional Input

Energy Trust's support for energy efficiency and renewable energy has economic benefits of saving people and businesses money, investing in local communities, creating jobs and increasing business income.

Energy efficiency is among the lowest-cost energy resources available to utilities to meet their customers' energy needs, costing less than what utilities would pay for most other sources. When customers save energy, utilities are able to defer spending on new infrastructure, including energy generation, transmission and distribution. These deferred costs help keep rates lower than they otherwise would be and become savings that are passed on to all utility customers, including businesses. For every $1 Energy Trust has invested in energy efficiency, utility customers have saved nearly $2.72.

Since 2002, participating customers have also saved $8.5 billion on energy bills from building retrofits, operations and maintenance improvements, high-performance new construction and renewable energy systems. These savings recirculate in Oregon's economy, driving broader economic benefits for all. Dollars saved on energy bills deliver far-reaching benefits to the economy through new purchases of goods and services, job creation, increased wages and new business income.

Since 2002, the net economic benefits of Energy Trust's expenditures, energy savings and renewable energy generation added $12.7 billion to Oregon's economy, including $4.3 billion in wages, $699 million in small business income and employment equivalent to 93,600 full-time jobs. (Figures are based on an independent analysis by Pinnacle Economics.)

Energy Trust's network of more than 1,600 trade ally contractors and 145 allied businesses located in Oregon and Washington – including local electricians, construction workers, engineers, architects and others – report employing about 17,500 people related to our work in the marketplace. Businesses range in size from one to 200 employees or more; the majority are small businesses with 20 employees or fewer.

For local businesses, energy efficiency and renewable energy solutions not only control costs, but also help meet growing sustainability and corporate responsibility commitments. Energy Trust features many examples on our website, from A-dec in Newberg to Laika in Hillsboro.

If you have materials and or/reports that would be helpful for the Prosperity Council to review, please upload them here. (Max 16MB)

- Economic Impacts of Energy Trust of Oregon's 2023 Program Activities (most recently completed study), accessible at https://www.energytrust.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/ETO-PY2023-Final-04_29_2024.pdf

May 4, 2026

Office of Governor Tina Kotek
Attn: Tim Knopp, Chief Prosperity Officer, and Members of the Governor's Prosperity Council
900 Court Street, Suite 254
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Preserving Oregon's workers' compensation advantage and system stability

Dear Mr. Knopp and Members of the Governor's Prosperity Council,

On behalf of a broad coalition of Oregon employer associations and business organizations—representing thousands of employers across every region and industry—we write to underscore the importance of preserving a workers' compensation system that is stable, predictable, and affordable. Many of our member organizations participate in SAIF group insurance programs, giving us direct insight into how the system affects hiring, investment, and long-term business decisions.

We appreciate the Governor's Prosperity Council's role in advising the Governor on strategies that advance the Prosperity Roadmap, strengthen Oregon's economy, and support sustainable business growth. As you consider recommendations that will shape Oregon's long-term competitiveness, we urge you to consider the benefits of Oregon's current workers' compensation system. Oregon's workers' compensation system is not merely a regulatory requirement, but a proven economic asset that supports job retention, investment, and statewide economic resilience.

Oregon's workers' compensation system provides employers with a meaningful cost advantage relative to many other states. The Oregon Department of Consumer and Business Services (DCBS) publishes a nationally recognized biennial study comparing workers' compensation premium rates across all 50 states and Washington, D.C. According to the most recent edition, Oregon ranks 38th overall, meaning only twelve states have lower average premium rates. By comparison, California ranks among the most expensive states in the nation; Washington remains significantly more costly than Oregon; and while Idaho is lower-cost than many states, it still ranks higher than Oregon.

For employers, workers' compensation is a foundational cost that directly affects competitiveness and business planning. Stable and predictable premiums allow employers to plan, hire, and invest with confidence. When costs remain steady, businesses are better positioned to expand and create jobs; when systems become more volatile or expensive, growth slows—particularly in labor-intensive industries operating on narrow margins. Across our coalition, employers consistently identify Oregon's workers' compensation stability as an important factor in their ability to remain competitive nationally.

Oregon's success in maintaining an affordable and stable workers' compensation system is closely tied to SAIF Corporation. As Oregon's not-for-profit public insurer, SAIF was designed to serve as a stabilizing force in the system, ensuring broad access to coverage, disciplined pricing, and long-term financial reliability during both routine economic cycles and extraordinary events. All funds paid to SAIF are held in trust within the Industrial Accident Fund and used exclusively for purposes authorized under Oregon's workers' compensation laws, keeping system resources focused on injured workers, employers, and long-term system integrity.

SAIF's strong capital position and mission-driven pricing model have helped keep Oregon's workers' compensation premiums among the lowest in the nation while maintaining strong benefits for injured workers. Since system reforms in 1990, pure premium rates have declined 83% while claims per 100 workers fell by 73%, thanks in large part to the safety efforts of Oregon employers and carriers like SAIF.

SAIF uses its investment earnings to operate at a loss, helping moderate premiums and supporting predictability for employers without compromising worker protections. SAIF's financial strength also allows Oregon's workers' compensation system to withstand catastrophic events that could generate widespread claims and economic disruption, providing critical stability at moments when employers, workers, and public entities are most vulnerable.

SAIF also plays an essential role in supporting Oregon's public sector, insuring nearly all public employers statewide, including school districts. SAIF also takes care of the vast majority of first responders, who all Oregonians rely on to be healthy and ready to assist when the state needs them the most.

By maintaining broad participation and a long-term approach to pricing, SAIF helps limit volatility for employers whose budgets are particularly sensitive to cost swings. In addition, SAIF provides essential coverage for high-hazard and hard-to-insure industries that are foundational to Oregon's economy, including construction, agriculture, logging, trucking, and wood products. Beyond insurance coverage, SAIF's investment in workplace safety and return-to-work programs contributes to long-term cost control, workforce stability, and improved productivity statewide.

Oregon's workers' compensation system is one bright spot in the current business climate. Our current workers' compensation system reflects decades of labor-management collaboration and disciplined policy choices that transformed one of the nation's most expensive systems into one of its most competitive.

As the Prosperity Council develops recommendations to strengthen Oregon's economy, we respectfully encourage an approach that builds on what is working. This includes preserving SAIF and therefore affordability for employers. The current system maintains the financial and structural foundations that support economic growth, resilience, and a healthy workers' compensation system that serves Oregon workers and businesses.

Respectfully,

Coalition of Oregon Employer and Business Associations

Dear Members of the Governor's Prosperity Council,

On behalf of Move Oregon Forward, a coalition of transportation and environmental advocacy organizations, we are pleased to share the attached report, *Smarter Investing in Transportation for a Stronger Oregon Economy*, as a resource for the Council's work. **At its core, transportation policy is not separate from economic policy; it is economic policy.** The way Oregon raises, prioritizes, and spends transportation dollars directly affects the strength and success of our economy.

The report, a compilation of best practices from across the United States of America and other countries, demonstrates that Oregon's strongest transportation business case is not a status quo approach that too often defaults to costly expansion before lower-cost preservation, safety, operational, and multimodal strategies. Rather, it is a disciplined investment approach that creates durable transportation solutions. The report demonstrates a need to focus on maintenance and repair of the current system and additional investments in:

- Improved **safety** infrastructure
- Expanded **transit** and **active transportation** options
- Transportation **electrification** and charging infrastructure
- **Clean energy** made in the Northwest, powering clean electric vehicles, combined with **grid resilience**
- Efficient **land use**

Providing people with transportation options and electrifying the system will lower household costs, connect more workers to jobs, improve access to customers and main streets, and generate more economic value for each public dollar.

The Council's work offers an important opportunity to connect Oregon's economic strategy with its transportation strategy. If Oregon wants a stronger economy, it needs a transportation system that gives people and businesses more reliable, affordable, and efficient ways to move. Safety, transit, walking and biking, electrification, freight reliability, and good governance should not be treated as side issues. They are core economic infrastructure.

Please use this report as a resource as the Council develops recommendations for the Governor and the state. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss the findings further.

Sincerely,
Move Oregon Forward

Smarter Investing in Transportation for a Stronger Oregon Economy

Executive Summary

Transportation policy is not separate from economic policy, it is economic policy. For Oregon, the strongest business case is not "a status quo investment approach," but a recommitment to a transportation and energy vision that lowers household costs, expands access to workers and customers, improves freight reliability, reduces crashes, strengthens local energy resilience. The evidence from Oregon, national, and international research points in the same direction, that investments in transit, walking biking, trails, targeted safety upgrades, transportation electrification, charging infrastructure, and grid resilience can:

- **Create more jobs and economic activity per dollar of public investment**;
- **Save Oregonians money** by giving households and businesses lower-cost, less volatile transportation options, including electric vehicles, transit, walking, and biking;
- **Deliver benefits faster** by prioritizing projects that reach main streets, pocketbooks, and local economies sooner, and deliver more projects on time and on budget;
- **Build compounding local benefits** by keeping more transportation spending in Oregon through local utilities, electrical workers, maintenance jobs, safer streets, and existing infrastructure;
- **Reduce strain on Oregon's environment and infrastructure** by making better use of roads, transit lines, and walkable centers, which can support more housing at lower public cost.

Overview

Oregon's transportation and energy investments should be judged by a straightforward business standard: **which investments create the most durable economic value for each public dollar spent?** By that measure, multimodal transportation, targeted safety improvements, electrification, and electrical grid upgrades outperform a status quo strategy centered on the traditional projects and priorities of our transportation system. These investments lower the cost of living, expand access to jobs and customers, improve freight movement at key bottlenecks, reduce the economic toll of crashes and pollution, and generally create more jobs per dollar while delivering benefits faster than large megaprojects focused primarily on lane expansion.

The research outlined below offers specific lenses for understanding why a comprehensive transportation system, rich in choices, can reduce costs for Oregon households, businesses, and the state. It also shows how a smarter investment portfolio can put Oregon on a stronger path toward sustained economic growth.

1 - Transportation as Economic Policy

Top-level takeaway: *Transportation policy is economic policy, and the strongest economic returns for Oregon come from maintaining the roads we have, expanding transit and active transportation, and investing in electrification, rather than defaulting to broad, general-purpose road expansion. These choices lower household costs, create more jobs per public dollar, and protect the value of past infrastructure investments.*

1.1 Why is transportation intrinsically linked to our economy

Transportation policy is not separate from economic policy; it is economic policy. The way Oregon invests in transportation, land use, and infrastructure shapes our economy in the near term and over decades. It affects how much families spend on getting around, how easily workers can reach their jobs, how reliably businesses can move goods, and how much public infrastructure the state must build and maintain.

The research points to a practical conclusion: Oregon can get more economic value and more long-lasting solutions by investing in systems that lower costs and make better use of what we already have. Smarter land-use decisions can reduce both housing and transportation costs. Efficiency and electrification can cut long-term fuel dependence and household energy burdens. Stronger public transportation can increase access to jobs, support local business activity, and help avoid the economic and social costs of disinvestment.

Put simply, transportation investment is a pocketbook issue. The question is not just how Oregon moves people and goods, but whether our investments make daily life more affordable, our economy more productive, and our public dollars go further. [12][18][19]

1.2 Maintaining what we have first: The economic value of fix it first

Maintaining what we already have is one of the strongest economic strategies available to Oregon. Repair and preservation projects put people to work quickly because they are more labor-intensive and spend less on land acquisition than new road construction. National analysis finds that road repair generates about 16 percent more jobs per dollar than road expansion.

The economic case is not just about jobs. Poor road conditions raise costs for households, businesses, freight operators, and transit agencies. Drivers incur higher vehicle maintenance and wear costs, while rough pavement can slow freight movement, reduce reliability, and increase operating costs for transit providers. In other words, deferred maintenance shows up as higher costs across the economy. [51][52]

It is also a bad fiscal bargain. Once roads fall out of good condition, the cost to fix them rises sharply. Transportation agencies commonly find that every $1 spent on timely maintenance can avoid $5+ in later reconstruction and other costs. A repair-first approach, where money and policy align towards maintaining what we have, therefore creates near-term jobs, protects prior public investments, lowers costs for Oregonians, and helps the state avoid much larger liabilities down the road. [69]

1.3 Reducing household cost burden and increasing disposable income with smarter investments

The most immediate economic gain from multimodal and electrification investments often does not show up in a ribbon-cutting photo. It shows up as money left in household budgets. For many Oregon families, transportation is one of the largest monthly expenses after housing. Oregon's transit-and-housing study found that households spend a combined 56 percent of their income on housing and transportation. Nationally, households spent an average of $13,318 on transportation in 2024, while the average cost to own and operate a new vehicle reached $11,577 per year in 2025.

Those costs fall hardest on families with the least room to absorb them. In 2022, the lowest-income households spent 30 percent of their after-tax income on transportation, and low-income households with at least one vehicle spent 38 percent. That means transportation costs are not just a mobility issue. They are a wage, affordability, and workforce issue. Investments that help families avoid a second car, drive less, rely on safe, frequent transit, or switch to lower-cost electric transportation act as a recurring cost reduction for workers and employers alike. Climate Solutions' research has found that rapidly decarbonizing transportation through reduced driving, clean fuels for targeted uses, and clean-energy-powered electrification could save families up to $5,000 per year in transportation costs. [1][2][3][4][33]

While reducing driving and the need for a car is a deeper affordability tool, electrification is a key affordability tool for Oregonians who need a car, including rural Oregonians, fleet owners, and transit operators. Electric vehicles are 60% to 75% cheaper to operate than their internal combustion engine (ICE) counterparts, and this advantage is even stronger when gas prices spike, as they have in 2026. For example, it costs the equivalent of $1.32 per gallon to fill an EV, while, as of early May 2026, gas and diesel prices are over $5-6+ per gallon. While EVs have long been more expensive than their fossil-fuel counterparts, the total cost of ownership (the cost of the vehicle, plus fuel, maintenance, and other expenses) has favored EVs for several years now. Now, with more affordable, high-quality used EVs and purchase prices for many passenger EVs reaching near parity with their ICE counterparts, electrification is a key affordability pathway for Oregon. [36][38][55][56]

1.4 Using every public dollar towards job creation and maximizing return on investment

The job-creation case points in the same direction. Transportation dollars go further when spent on repair of the current system, transit, active transportation, and charging infrastructure rather than on new road expansion. Smart Growth America's review of stimulus-era transportation spending found that public transportation investments created 31 percent more jobs per dollar than new road and bridge construction, while road and bridge repair created 16 percent more jobs per dollar than new construction. Active transportation performs strongly, too. In *Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure: A National Study of Employment Impacts*, it was estimated that bicycle projects create about 10 jobs per $1 million spent, multi-use trails about 9.6 jobs, and road-only projects about 7.8 jobs. More recent transit and charging analyses reinforce the same point about job creation. APTA estimates that every $1 billion invested in public transportation can support 41,400 jobs, $3.1 billion in worker income, and $251 million in tax revenue, while generating roughly $5 billion in long-term economic value. Charging infrastructure also fits within this high-return category. The International Council on Clean Transportation (ICCT) estimates that U.S. charging build-out could support nearly 160,000 full-time equivalent jobs by 2032, including more than 78,000 in electrical installation, maintenance, and repair. Other estimates suggest charger deployment can generate roughly 12 jobs per $1 million invested. [5][6][7][21]

Going deeper, transportation electrification strengthens the long-term jobs growth by shifting spending away from imported gasoline and diesel and toward local utilities, electricians, charger installers, grid workers, and clean-vehicle supply chains. Installation, grid connection, electrical work, and maintenance all happen in the communities where chargers are built. Those projects can also support upstream investments in energy production and transmission, creating additional economic activity over time. Vehicle rebates, tax credits, and fleet incentives support this growth more indirectly, but they are still essential market-building tools. By increasing demand for electric vehicles, they also increase demand for batteries, parts, charging infrastructure, software, maintenance, and related services. [21][22][37]

The broader clean-energy labor market tells the same story. U.S. clean energy jobs grew 4.2 percent in 2023, more than twice the national average. Clean vehicle jobs grew even faster, increasing 11.4 percent in a single year. This is not a short-term bump. Globally, clean energy added roughly 1.5 million jobs in 2023, compared with about 940,000 in fossil fuels. That reflects a broader structural shift toward energy systems that require workers to build, operate, and maintain energy infrastructure in our local communities, rather than relying primarily on fuel extraction and combustion. States that move early are better positioned to capture that growth. Charging companies, fleet operators, manufacturers, startups, and suppliers are more likely to invest where policy signals are clear, infrastructure is expanding, and customer demand is strong. Put simply, chargers create in-state installation and maintenance work now. Rebates and tax credits grow the long-term market, lower consumer costs, and help sustain a larger clean-mobility economy over time. [22][34][35][37]

2 - How Clean and Multimodal Transportation Can Grow Oregon's Economy

Top-level takeaway: *The strongest economic returns come from targeted investments in trails, safety, transit, land-use coordination, electrification, and freight reliability, rather than from broad freeway expansion. These investments do double duty: they generate jobs, tourism revenue, labor-market access, and energy resilience, while also avoiding the major costs Oregon currently absorbs through crashes, pollution, sprawl, infrastructure, and spending on imported gasoline and diesel.*

2.1 - Trails for safety and for enabling recreation and tourism

Trail funding should be seen as both a tourism strategy and a transportation strategy. Connected trail systems help visitors stay longer, spend more, and reach small businesses without making every trip car-dependent. They also fill practical gaps in the transportation network, especially in places where safe walking and biking connections are needed outside the traditional road right-of-way.

That is exactly the role Oregon's Community Paths Program is designed to play. The program funds multi-use paths that improve walking and biking access and safety, including regional paths that connect communities and provide critical links to schools, jobs, medical services, transit, downtowns, and popular destinations for both residents and visitors.[43][44]

Trails and outdoor recreation are not ornamental investments. They are economic infrastructure. Nationally, outdoor recreation generated $696.7 billion in GDP in 2024, representing 2.4 percent of the U.S. economy. The Oregon SCORP reports that direct trip and equipment expenditures linked to outdoor recreation were estimated at $15.7 billion in 2022. A separate Oregon Parks and Recreation economic impact analysis reports that outdoor recreation spending generated $20.6 billion in economic output, contributed $12.4 billion to Oregon GDP, and supported 192,000 full- and part-time jobs. Those benefits ripple through local economies. Every dollar spent on outdoor recreation in Oregon generated an additional $0.31 in secondary economic activity, supporting restaurants, hotels, grocery stores, outfitters, retailers, and rural main streets. Trails are a core part of that economy. Rails-to-Trails Conservancy estimates that active transportation currently generates more than $34.1 billion annually in economic value and could exceed $138.5 billion with improved network connectivity. [41][42]

The Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail is a great example. ODOT cited $447 million in direct visitor spending in the Mt. Hood and Columbia River Gorge region in 2019, supporting more than 5,000 jobs. Bicycle recreation is already part of that economic engine. A 2014 Dean Runyan Associates forecast for communities along the Historic Columbia River Highway estimated roughly 230,000 bicycle recreation trips in 2013, associated with about $21.1 million in spending, supported about 270 jobs, and produced more than $900,000 in state and local tax receipts. The value is likely higher today, given the growth of outdoor recreation and the added economic potential of completing connected walking and biking systems. [45][46]

2.2 - Safety, public health, and avoiding economic losses

Investing in safer roads is a critical moral and ethical choice. And yet, safety is not just a public health goal; it is a productivity and cost-containment strategy. Oregon already uses benefit-cost and cost-effectiveness methods to prioritize safety investments, including bicycle and pedestrian safety projects. That makes sense because crashes impose enormous costs on households, employers, insurers, health systems, and the broader economy. Nationally, the economic cost of motor vehicle crashes reached $340 billion in 2019, and the full societal harm approached $1.4 trillion when quality-of-life losses were included. Every fatal or serious injury avoided means medical spending avoided, work time preserved, productivity protected, insurance pressure reduced, and freight and commuter delay prevented. Safer multimodal streets are not a “nice to have.” They are one of the strongest economic-return categories available. [31][32]

Pollution tells a similar story. An Oregon DEQ report estimated that diesel fine-particle pollution caused substantial health harm in Oregon under 2005 conditions, including 176 premature deaths and 25,910 work-loss days annually, with avoidable public health impacts exceeding $1.6 billion annually. These are real costs that Oregonians and our healthcare system bear, and they can be mitigated with strategic investments in electrification, congestion reduction, and ports and rail. [40]

2.3 - Land-use: key for affordability, productivity, and main streets

Productive places matter, and land use is a major factor in their productivity. When people can reach jobs, shops, services, and housing without relying on a car for every trip, places tend to work better for both households and businesses. When businesses are closer, freight shipping becomes easier, and it's easier to link errands with less driving or via transit.

The evidence supports that conclusion. A Brookings Institution study, *Walk this Way,* found that the most walkable places in metropolitan Washington, D.C. performed better economically and with higher home values than less walkable places. A National Institute for Transportation and Communities study found many positive business impacts, including increased sales and employment from investments in walking and biking. This data is important because “bad for business” remains a common objection to walking, biking, and transit investments, even though the evidence for that claim is weak and the data tends to point in the opposite direction. Oregon’s experience shows that reducing or eliminating parking minimums, along with exemptions from development charges, can lower development costs and support more housing near transit and jobs. For downtown areas and main streets, the lesson is straightforward: better access by foot, bike, and transit tends to strengthen land productivity rather than weaken it. [1][8][9][18]

The fiscal case points in the same direction. A partner study by 1000 Friends of Oregon & ECONorthwest, *More Extensive Is More Expensive,* found that infrastructure costs are often overlooked in land use decisions, especially the full lifecycle costs of operation, maintenance, and replacement. Ultimately, the cost of maintaining low-density sprawl is not fully internalized and is burdening our ability to maintain our transportation infrastructure. More compact “quality growth” can reduce public infrastructure costs, including road costs by 12 percent and water and sewer costs by 14 percent compared with sprawl development patterns. In other words, compact, connected communities do not just support local businesses. They also reduce long-term public infrastructure burdens and improve the return on the infrastructure Oregon has already built. [1][18][39]

This is also central to affordability. Transportation is typically the second-largest household expense, so housing and transportation costs should be understood together. The Center for Neighborhood Technology’s Housing + Transportation Index shows that location-efficient neighborhoods, with better access to jobs, transit, and services, can substantially reduce combined household costs even where housing prices are higher. By contrast, lower-cost housing in auto-dependent areas can come with higher transportation costs that wipe out any housing savings and drive up the total cost of living.

For Oregon, where many households already spend a large share of their income on housing and transportation combined, aligning land use with multimodal access is one of the most effective ways to improve real affordability. The goal should not be cheaper housing on paper, but lower total costs to Oregonians. [48][18]

2.4 - Transit is essential for labor-market access and workforce participation

For employers, transportation is the gateway to workers. However, transit access is still too often treated as a secondary issue, even though roughly 30 percent of Oregonians cannot or do not drive. That is why transit funding can deliver such a strong economic return. It does not just move people from one place to another. It connects workers to jobs, employers to larger labor pools, and more Oregonians to opportunities to build income and wealth through affordable transportation. [54]

A Brookings study found that the typical job is accessible to only about 27 percent of the metropolitan workforce by transit. Stronger transit networks, especially when paired with better land-use planning, can materially improve employers' access to workers. A 2025 review, *Public transport investments as generators of economic and social activity*, concluded that public transport investments can generate broader economic and social benefits by improving accessibility, increasing employment opportunities, and raising incomes through better access to jobs, education, and services. For Oregon, investments in transit frequency, coverage, safe first- and last-mile connections, and transit-supportive land use are not just social policy; they are pro-business tools that can support stronger labor markets, higher workforce participation, and better job matching that can increase incomes. [10][11][12][10]

2.5 - Transportation electrification, related grid investments, and resilience

The State Energy Strategy finds that the lowest-cost path for Oregon depends on high levels of efficiency and electrification. This means that as we electrify our transportation sector, we will also be investing in our grid and energy systems. Energy strategy modeling estimates that the transition from fossil fuels to electrification could add roughly 10,700 to 18,200 jobs in the electricity sector by 2035. It also found that delaying the electrification of medium- and heavy-duty transportation would increase costs by about $31 billion by 2050 compared to the least cost pathway that leans into MHD electrification, mostly due to higher fuel costs borne by fleets. For households and fleets, the basic economics are just as important. Electric vehicles can reduce fuel and maintenance costs over the life of the vehicle, with federal sources estimating savings of up to roughly $21,000 in discounted lifetime costs. Electrification is not only a climate strategy, it is a cost-saving, local jobs, and energy-resilience strategy. [19][20][23][24]

At scale, electrification strengthens Oregon's economy by shifting transportation spending away from imported gasoline and diesel and toward domestic industries such as Oregon utilities, electricians, charger installers, grid upgrades, and local electrical maintenance jobs. That matters for resilience as well as affordability. Instead of sending more household and business dollars out of state through fuel purchases, which are quite literally burned up, Oregon can invest in the infrastructure and workforce needed to power cleaner vehicles with electricity increasingly produced, delivered, and managed through our regional grid. In fact, with smart policies to manage off-peak EV charging demand, **electrification could put downward pressure on electricity rates** by getting more use out of the current system and infrastructure, spreading costs, and minimizing the need for upgrades. This downward pressure applies to both passenger cars charged at home and medium- and heavy-duty zero-emission trucks charged at a depot. With continued development, such as vehicle-to-grid technologies that let you power your home from your EV, and continued utility ratemaking decisions on TE and microgrids, these benefits will likely only grow. [19][21][24][25][26][34][57][70]

Grid and resilience investments, which are needed to support a clean energy future, including transportation electrification, reinforce the same economic case for economic growth. Oregon's resilience and community-energy programs already connect clean electricity investments with local jobs and stronger communities. The broader economic returns are significant: Brattle estimates that each $1 billion of transmission investment supports about 13,000 FTE-years of employment and $2.4 billion in economic activity. Paired with transportation electrification, these investments help move Oregon away from volatile fossil fuel markets and toward a cleaner system built on local electricity, local infrastructure, and local workers. [25][26][19][34][35]

2.6 - Solutions to freight delays that increase reliability and economic opportunity

While a thorny issue, congestion management is a core transportation and economic issue. Put simply, for commuters and freight, time waiting in traffic is economic inefficiency. The natural response to congestion is often to pursue roadway expansions, on the logic that more lane miles will generate more throughput. Duranton and Turner's seminal "fundamental law of road congestion" found that vehicle travel tends to rise roughly in proportion to major road expansion, and has been subsequently confirmed in multiple studies using real-world data. The OECD has similarly concluded that building new road capacity alone is not an efficient response to peak demand, and the United Kingdom's transport evidence review says induced demand should be properly accounted for when evaluating projects. As the libertarian think tank Cato Institute's *The Political Economy of Congestion Pricing* puts it, congestion pricing is economically sound because traffic is not free; drivers pay either in dollars or in wasted time. In a 2026 comparison of congestion-reduction strategies, the Victoria Transport Policy Institute found that roadway expansions are among the most expensive options available to planners, yet they generally achieve only short-term improvements in travel efficiency. However, conventional planning practices undervalue less costly, longer-lasting strategies like Transportation Demand Management (TDM) or improving space-efficient modes, and instead pursue expansion first in cases where other options would perform better at a lower cost. For Oregon's businesses that rely on trucking and our highway system, the practical takeaway is clear: **we need more cost-effective and durable solutions to congestion with the clear goal of a highway and road system that is more dependable, not just bigger.** [13][14][15][16][17][68][49]

If capacity is not a first-line treatment, then what is? While there are real political complications for Oregon, congestion pricing is one of the clearest evidence-backed congestion tools: London, Stockholm, and Singapore all saw meaningful congestion reductions after pricing, with a 20% to 30% decrease in cross-town commute times. Early New York City congestion pricing results point in the same direction, with the MTA reporting that traffic into Manhattan's Congestion Relief Zone fell almost 7% after congestion pricing began and that traffic speeds across the city improved substantially in the first year. Efficient congestion pricing can also generate revenues to reinvest in other decongestion strategies such as, transit, transportation demand management, multimodal planning, and smart growth development policies, significantly increasing the positive impacts of congestion pricing by using it to create alternatives to driving and incurring the congestion pricing. The backlash story is overstated. A six-month Nature study, *Public attitude, behavior, and social norm changes over six months with the NYC congestion charge,* found that 57.1% of New Yorkers supported congestion pricing before launch, and support did not significantly decline after implementation. Instead, supporters became more committed, opposition peaked during rollout week, and norms against unnecessary driving strengthened inside the toll zone—suggesting the policy can become more politically durable once people live with it. [65][66][58][59][60][65]

Multimodal transportation and land use reduce congestion by shortening trips, shifting some trips out of cars, and helping the same street network move more people; newer VMT-reduction reviews continue to identify transit service, active transportation, compact/mixed-use land use, and parking/demand management as core strategies, especially when these tools are implemented together rather than as isolated projects. It's also important to mention that these investments implemented together provide deeper economic benefits to the state, can be delivered faster, and provide durable congestion relief. By applying these strategies before pursuing expansion, planners can resolve many of their congestion problems without incurring the high costs of roadway construction and protect state dollars to address any severe or stubborn challenges that remain. [61][62][63][68]

In practical terms, congestion relief comes from a coordinated package of cost-effective first-line strategies: price the most crowded road space, reinvest revenue in better transit and non-driving options, build safe walking and biking networks for short trips, manage parking and curb demand, and allow more homes, jobs, and services near each other so fewer daily trips require driving. [61][62][64]

3 - Additional Benefits and Needs

Top-level takeaway: *How we select transportation projects is only half the equation. Oregon's ability to deliver projects with strong in-house expertise and accountability for being on time and on budget determines whether the state gets the full economic value of every transportation dollar. Faster delivery, stronger agency capacity, and clear project scoring are the levers that turn good policy into real outcomes.*

3.1 - Delivering projects on time with more benefits

Timing is an economic variable, and the ability to deliver projects on time or even ahead of schedule matters immensely. Smart Growth America found that repair and maintenance projects spend money faster and create jobs more quickly than new-capacity projects. In practice, that means bus-priority treatments, sidewalks, crossings, bike-network completion, safe-routes investments, and targeted road improvements and repair can begin producing business and household benefits years before a large-scale project opens. This is because these projects generally cost less, have less material cost uncertainty, don't generally require acquisition of right of way or land, and can be designed and completed with more internal agency capacity, which reduces risk, consulting costs. [5][13]

3.2 - Futureproofing our workforce, agency capacity, and reducing reliance on consulting

Finally, transportation project selection is only half the issue. The ability to deliver projects is the other half. Even the right investment strategy will fall short if the state lacks the staff, expertise, authority, and governance needed to deliver projects well. Oregon's own performance reporting underscores the challenge. In Oregon fiscal year 2024, 60 percent of construction projects were delivered on time, and 89 percent were delivered on budget. Brookings' procurement research found that almost 90 percent of surveyed state DOT procurement officials said their agencies were moderately or severely understaffed, and respondents linked overreliance on consultants to higher costs. A 2025 state-capacity paper reached a similar conclusion, finding that higher-quality engineers were associated with lower project costs and that the loss of in-house expertise can cost agencies far more than they save in salaries. Recent research on state transportation capacity finds that staffing matters for infrastructure delivery: one additional state DOT employee per 1,000 residents is correlated with 26% lower project-level costs for resurfacing projects, suggesting that in-house public-sector expertise can help agencies manage contracts, reduce costly change orders, and deliver projects more efficiently. [27][28][29][30][67]

If Oregon wants abundance — more useful projects delivered faster and at lower cost — then we must invest in ODOT's internal capacity from finance, planners, engineers, operations staff, repair crews, and more. It is a core economic investment that delivers real savings for the state, all while employing local Oregonians, keeping dollars closer to our economy. This is validated by Eno's project-delivery work, including international comparisons, which points to the same practical lesson: strong agencies need clear authority, competent staff, and sound governance.[29]

3.3 - Why accountability, transparency, and outcomes matter for transportation and our economy

In the 2026 legislative session, Move Oregon Forward moved two accountability policy bills. While they did not pass, their content is critical to improving accountability and transparency in our transportation system.

SB 1542 (specifically the -2 amendment) would have required the state to plan ahead through a 10-year transportation investment plan and to score and rank projects before they are funded, with that process backed by statute. It would also have required clearer reporting on road conditions and greater public transparency about which projects are selected, how they are evaluated, and why they move forward. SB 1543 would have strengthened oversight by the Oregon Transportation Commission and required the state to have a clear plan before taking on debt for major projects. Together, the bills were designed to make sure transportation dollars are spent on projects that actually deliver results. [50][51]

Peer states show why this matters. Virginia's SMART SCALE program scores and ranks projects using clear criteria, including safety, congestion, accessibility, land use, environmental quality, and economic development, then makes those scores public so funding decisions are more transparent and defensible. Minnesota takes a similar performance-oriented approach through MnSHIP, with a strong focus on system condition, asset management, and "fix-it-first" investments. National guidance points to the same lesson: when states set clear goals, rank projects against those goals, and track results, they are better positioned to get stronger outcomes from limited dollars. [52][53]

For Oregon, this is ultimately about making smarter choices. A system that scores projects before funding them, requires stronger oversight, and reports results publicly can help avoid wasting money on projects that do not deliver. It also makes it easier to answer the question every taxpayer should be able to ask: are we getting what we paid for? [50][52][53]

Conclusion

We need to prioritize safety, transit, walking, and biking, transportation electrification, and grid resilience all while adopting stronger public accountability and transparency policies. It is critical we reserve highway dollars for preservation, safety, and truly targeted freight bottlenecks rather than broad general-purpose lane expansion. This focus enables a future that is a more competitive, more affordable, more resilient, and more economically productive path for Oregon businesses and households. This matters greatly as Oregon continues to chart a new course for an economy focused on growth and affordability.

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And many others, thank you!

May 7, 2026

To: Members of Governor Kotek's Prosperity Council

From: The Oregon Association of Nurseries

Subject: Recommendations

The Nursery and Greenhouse industry is the largest sector of agriculture which produces and ships environmentally beneficial green goods and competes on a national and international level.

Background: The nursery and greenhouse industry is Oregon's leading agricultural commodity, valued at over $1.3 billion annually. Critically, we are a traded sector: 74% of our sales flow to customers outside Oregon, making this commodity essential to the state's trade profile and economic resilience. Nursery association members represent wholesale plant growers, Christmas tree growers, retailers, and greenhouse operators. Our members are located throughout the state, with our largest nursery growing operations found in Clackamas, Marion, Washington, Yamhill, and Multnomah Counties.

It is our distinct pleasure and responsibility to provide measurable and impactful recommendations to the Prosperity Council. The OAN has followed closely the progress and dedication that the council has as its mission to change the very course of the Oregon economy. For that work, we laud you and your efforts.

In an effort to be concise, the association would like to provide some top line recommendations – of which we are more than happy to provide detail as the council would desire.

Oregon is at a crossroads and the key takeaway from our comments is that unless a change occurs in Oregon's business climate through a number of policy choices, the state will not achieve a predictable, manageable and competitive ability.

We are grateful for your time and attention to our comments below.

Oregon must align our labor standards, and overtime rules with our neighboring states, or competitive states.

- The implementation of the Agricultural overtime law is having a negative effect industry wide. Growers compete on a national level with states at the federal minimum wage, further hampering market growth.
- Colorado recently changed its agricultural overtime law to recognize that the industry has peak seasons that are driven by weather, product type, and labor costs. Colorado changed its peak season to 56 hours a week.
- California, who phased in its Ag OT law (much like Oregon) is finding that workers are making less with reductions of hours to the 40 hour threshold and productivity of growers has been reduced.
- The OAN recognizes that a number of factors go into remaining competitive – including regulatory costs, transportation costs to get product to market, and labor.
- OAN is part of an agricultural coalition that recommends freezing agricultural overtime to a 48 hour threshold and allow a 12-week 56 hour OT threshold for peak season labor needs. This solution would go a long way to stabilizing employee hours Oregon's growing loss of market and competiveness.
- The Prosperity Council should also review and examine the total compensation costs to Oregon agriculture by recognizing state mandated policies – minimum wage, paid family leave, regulatory costs, etc.) to reconcile the true cost per hour of an employee and compare it to other states.
- Ultimately the OAN supports OBI's recommendation on overtime: Repeal agricultural and manufacturing overtime laws, which place artificial constraints on workers' earning capacity and employers' ability to meet production demand fluctuations, particularly those tied to harvesting crops or other seasonally specific demands
- The OAN recommends that the council work reduce barriers by state agencies and collaborate with agricultural operations and their efforts applying for temporary workers (H2A and H2B) to assist in an ever-increasing worker shortage in Oregon.

- ➢ A wholesale review and consultation with agriculture on OSHA heat rules, worker protection standards, and farm housing rules.

A Comprehensive view of Oregon's tax code is needed

There has been substantial work done by Oregon Business & Industry on the subject of Oregon's competitiveness and need to do a comprehensive review of the state's tax code. OAN would point out a few comments found in the OBI Competitiveness Agenda and provide links to the source material in their competitiveness scorecard.

- ➢ Oregon in 2024 slipped seven places, to 28th, in CNBC's annual America's Top States for Business ranking. CNBC gave Oregon an "F" for business-friendliness, with only New York and New Jersey faring worse.
- ➢ From June 2023 to June 2024, Oregon ranked only 45th nationally in manufacturing growth, according to OBI's 2024 report on the condition of Oregon's manufacturing sector.
- ➢ Oregon's effective state business tax burden soared 33% between 2019 and 2023, according to a 2024 report conducted for OBI by consulting firm EY. Oregon's corporate tax ranking, at 49th, now tops only Delaware's in the nonpartisan Tax Foundation's 2025 State Tax Competitiveness Index.
- ➢ Oregon lost 6,000 residents between 2022 and 2023, according to a report released recently by the Common Sense Institute Oregon. This trend exacerbates the workforce challenges facing existing businesses and discourages further investment here.

Resources:

OBI Competitiveness Report - OBI Releases Oregon Competitiveness Agenda - Oregon Business & Industry

OBI Prosperity Council Memo - OBI-Prosperity-Council-Recommendations-4.2.2026.pdf

OBI Scorecard - The Oregon Scorecard - Oregon Business & Industry

Small Business is agriculture, and it needs support

Oregon agriculture's profile is that of small businesses, family farms, and generational commitment to growing and shipping quality green goods throughout the country and internationally.

- Senate bill 1507 disconnecting from the federal tax code has been problematic both in terms of cost classified small business shares and accelerated depreciation. Especially for assets in Oregon, another look at accelerated depreciation might help businesses invest in things like agricultural equipment.
- Elimination of the Commercial Activities Tax on green goods would go a long way in reducing supply chain costs.
- While common sense land use is needed in Oregon, we urge caution to recognize that agricultural lands are essential businesses without walls. Long-term structural planning needs to be advanced that simultaneously protects Oregon's natural working lands while also providing stable growth for housing and economic development. There is a model with an OAN led Urban-Rural Reserves passed by the Oregon legislature over a decade ago. This bill was never intended to be "the answer" but a model policy for the state to update its land use planning.
- Business Oregon needs to be retooled and given an updated mission to evaluate Oregon's tax code, economic development support for Oregon's small business community. Reform needs to be meaningful and work toward achievable targets. The solution is not just one thing, rather many small improvements that – when coordinated – render big results.

Building blocks for a future workforce: Investment and connection to 4-year and community colleges and funding for CTE

- A core conduit to success in agriculture is the investment in our land grant university (Oregon State University) and our community colleges. The OAN has built bridges with these institutions to create a pipeline of a workforce, increased research to resolve emerging issues facing the industry, and to grow awareness of the very connection between our institutions of higher learning and business.
- Partnerships to build training programs and education requires a quantum leap of support by the state.
- A critical building block, before higher education, is getting kids engaged in agriculture at the High School level. It is the first step to building our workforce and fully funded CTE programs by the state is an appropriate step.

Oregon is missing the mark on climate

- OAN joins OBI in its desire to replace Oregon's unique Climate Protection Program with a market-based program that allows for legislative oversight and linkage with other states, invests related revenue in prioritized state policies related to GHG reduction (e.g., wildfire mitigation, transportation congestion relief, industrial equipment upgrades) and avoids duplicative or overlapping regulation of GHGs.

- OAN has been a long-standing critic of Oregon's Recycling Modernization Act. While examination of how to properly take plastic out of the waste stream is good policy, the manner in which EPR has been implemented is not only costly, but inconsistent with how other states are regulated. This law needs to be modernized to ensure it is constitutional, fair and transparent to regulated entities and consumers; to align costs with outcomes; and to align systems and costs with other programs. The OAN is leading a national conversation with the nursery and greenhouse industry and is working to develop a model policy. We view the council as a partner on this issue and will advise on our progress.
- Green goods, produced by the nursery and greenhouse industry, sequester carbon and have been selectively held out of balanced climate policy and how agriculture can mitigate climate change. There is emerging science on quantifying the benefits of green goods and recognition, research and investment in this area is encouraged.

As the largest sector of agriculture, a true traded sector commodity that brings over a billion dollars back to state each year, the Prosperity Council has an opportunity to make a difference on the future of our economy. Agriculture is the backbone of our state, and it is hurting. We cannot urge you enough to support the family farm. The above recommendations would go a long way towards bolstering the continued success of this economic driver and ensuring that family farms thrive for many generations to come.

May 11, 2026

Curtis Robinhold, Co-Chair Renée James, Co-Chair Tim Knopp, Chief Prosperity Officer Members, Oregon Prosperity Council c/o Office of the Governor 900 Court Street NE, Suite 254 Salem, OR 97301

cc: Governor Tina Kotek

Re: SB 1507 / Section 1202 QSBS, Input for the 2027 Legislative Proposal

Members of the Prosperity Council,

We're writing as the co-founders of FuelCloud, a B2B software company headquartered in Hillsboro. We build what is essentially an ATM for bulk fuel tanks, with software and hardware that tracks every gallon dispensed, prevents waste, and gives fleet operators security against fuel theft. Every function of the business is performed in Oregon: our hardware is assembled here, our software is written and developed here, and our sales and support teams are based here. We started the business as an Oregon LLC in 2016, converted to an Oregon C-corp (FuelCloud OPCO), bootstrapped the early years with one small strategic investment, and have grown to 26 Oregon employees. Every one of those positions is W-2, every one pays above $70,000 a year, and most are software engineering roles averaging over $100,000. We are actively hiring for three more right now. Our family has been in Oregon for five generations. We could have built this company anywhere; we built it here on purpose, and we intend to keep building it here. We're writing because we want the next generation of FuelCloud-like companies to have the same option.

We want to start by thanking Governor Kotek for what she did in her SB 1507 signing letter. She named QSBS specifically, acknowledged the impact on startups and small businesses, and committed the Prosperity Council to propose corrective legislation in 2027. That letter created a real opening, and we're writing because we think the Council's work benefits from hearing directly from a named Oregon company that fits squarely inside the policy gap the Governor identified.

We'd like to engage with the strongest arguments the bill's supporters made, on their own terms, and explain why we believe the Council's 2027 proposal still matters.

On who actually benefits from QSBS. The most-cited statistic in the SB 1507 debate was that 94 percent of national QSBS benefits accrue to taxpayers earning over $1 million annually. That figure is accurate but partly circular. By definition, anyone realizing $10 million or more in capital gains in a given year earns more than $1 million in income that year. The more useful question for state-level policy is what activity the exclusion actually incentivizes. Section 1202 only applies to original issuance of stock in operating C-corporations under specific size limits. It rewards founding a company, taking real risk, hiring people, and holding the stock long enough for the business to mature. That is precisely the activity Oregon's economic development priorities have been built around. FuelCloud is exactly the kind of company the policy was designed to encourage: bootstrapped, profitable, founder-operated, Oregon-headquartered, with a payroll dominated by mid- and senior-level engineers who own homes here, raise their families here, and pay full Oregon income tax on every dollar they earn. The policy-relevant question isn't who eventually realizes the gain. It's which state got the jobs, taxes, and economic activity along the way, the trained workforce that built up around the company, and the momentum that keeps a successful business growing where it started.

On what got swept into the bill. Section 1202 has been federal law since 1993, signed by President Clinton, retained through every administration since. The 2025 OBBBA expansions did change the program in real ways. They added partial exclusions at the 3 and 4 year holding marks, raised the per-issuer cap and indexed it for inflation, and lifted the company asset threshold from $50 million to $75 million. Those changes weren't drafted to benefit Silicon Valley; they were drafted to make QSBS actually usable for newer and smaller companies, where the original 5 year cliff and lower caps had become real obstacles. The companies most affected by SB 1507 are precisely the ones the OBBBA expansions were designed to help: newly formed C-corps and recently converted small businesses whose stock was issued after July 2025 and who now face a state-level penalty on the federal benefit they qualify for. FuelCloud is one of those companies. We converted from an Oregon LLC to an Oregon C-corp on August 1, 2025, less than a month after OBBBA was signed. Subject to the detailed requirements of Section 1202, companies like ours are the kind of Oregon founded, Oregon headquartered operating businesses the federal QSBS framework is intended to support. Our ask for the 2027 proposal is full conformity to current federal Section 1202, including the OBBBA expansions. If the Council concludes after analysis that some specific element of the OBBBA expansions warrants a separate Oregon decision, that conversation should happen on the merits of that element, not as a side effect of removing a 33 year old, bipartisan small business policy.

On whether SB 1507 will actually raise the projected revenue. SB 1507 paired its three decouplings, of which QSBS is one, with an EITC expansion that we view as a worthy policy. Our concern is that the QSBS provision is unlikely to fund it. Widely circulated projections for the QSBS provision use static scoring, applying the 9.9 percent rate to current Oregon QSBS-qualifying exit volume and projecting roughly $39 million in the current biennium, scaling to $83 million by the 2029 to 2031 biennium. Those projections appear to depend heavily on the assumption that current QSBS qualifying exit volume remains taxable in Oregon. But founder behavior is likely to change. A founder who legitimately changes residency before a sale closes may be able to avoid Oregon tax on stock gain that is no longer Oregon source income. For federally excluded QSBS, Washington currently does not impose its capital gains tax on gain excluded under IRC Section 1202. The point is not that every founder can or should move; it is that the tax planning incentive is large enough that many will evaluate it seriously. Note what this means for the bill's stated revenue goal: Oregon doesn't even capture the founder's exit gain unless the founder fails to plan, and in the process the state loses the ongoing personal income tax that founder would have paid for the rest of their working life, plus their continued spending and engagement in the local economy. A worthy program like the EITC expansion deserves a reliable funding source. SB 1507's QSBS provision is unlikely to be one.

On the ecosystem effect. Beyond the direct revenue question, our concern is what SB 1507's QSBS provision does to the Oregon tech base over the next decade. Oregon's tech sector is already absorbing serious headwinds. Intel, Nike, and Amazon have all announced or implemented significant workforce reductions affecting their Oregon operations, and the talent and partner networks built around those anchors are visibly thinner than they were two years ago. ECONorthwest's analysis, presented to this Council in January, found Oregon losing nearly $600 million per year in net income to out-migration. Every growing company SB 1507 pushes out of Oregon takes more with it than its own founders. It takes the next venture those founders would have started here. It takes the senior engineers who would have spun out to start their own companies. It takes the local attorneys, accountants, suppliers, and contract manufacturers whose viability depends on having Oregon-headquartered customers, including companies like ours. There is a tipping point at which even a deeply committed Oregon company finds itself working primarily with out-of-state partners and recruiting primarily from out-of-state talent, and at that point the cost calculus of staying gets very hard to justify on its own terms. SB 1507's QSBS provision accelerates that hollowing, and the Prosperity Council is one of the few bodies positioned to slow or reverse it.

Two specific things we'd ask the Council to consider in the 2027 proposal:

First, restore Oregon's conformity to Section 1202 as a clean, standalone provision. Tying it to a broader debate about federal tax conformity creates real risk that a fix never moves; a discrete bill keeps the policy on the timeline the Governor's signing letter committed to and avoids letting it become a bargaining chip for unrelated priorities.

FUELCLOUD

Second, make the restoration retroactive to January 1, 2026. We recognize that retroactive tax changes are unusual and that the Council may reasonably approach the request with caution. The principle, though, is symmetry. SB 1507 was passed in February 2026 with retroactive effect to January 1, 2026. Oregon already accepted the use of retroactivity for the disconnect itself. Restoring the prior law on the same retroactive basis isn't a novel principle; it's restoring symmetry to a law that started asymmetrically. We acknowledge a 2027 fix retroactive to January 1, 2026 is a longer retroactive window than SB 1507 itself used, and we recognize that the magnitude differs. We'd defer to the Council on whether full or partial retroactivity is the right path. Without some form of retroactivity, the law functions as a forced sale window through 2026 and most of 2027, pulling exits and relocations forward into the one-time bulge of departures the corrective legislation is explicitly meant to prevent.

The bottom line is that Oregon will not reliably collect the projected revenue, because founders can plan around the tax. But Oregon will reliably weaken its pitch to the next generation of founder led companies.

We'd welcome the chance to share more about what the Oregon ecosystem looks like from inside a growing tech company, what we're hearing from our peers, the shape of our own customer and supplier base, or anything else useful as the Council formulates its 2027 recommendation. If a hearing, a working session, or written follow-up would help, we are available.

Thank you for the work you're doing on this.

Sincerely,

Kevin Bretthauer Co-Founder & Chief Strategy Officer FuelCloud

Alex Bretthauer Co-Founder & President FuelCloud

May 12th, 2026

Renee James, Co-Chair
Curtis Robinhold, Co-Chair
Oregon Prosperity Council

Subject: Cascadia High-speed Rail as a Long-Term Economic Development Strategy for Oregon

Dear Co-Chairs James and Robinhold and Members of the Council,

Oregon stands at a pivotal moment. As the Prosperity Council develops recommendations to strengthen the state's business climate, workforce, and long-term competitiveness, we urge you to include Cascadia high-speed rail as a cornerstone strategy and catalyst project for Oregon's economic future. This project is not simply a transportation project—it is a generational investment that will expand economic opportunity, strengthen statewide connectivity, and position Oregon to compete in a rapidly changing global economy.

Cascadia high-speed rail aligns directly with the Council's charge: it improves the fundamentals of doing business, expands access to talent, and provides a durable platform for growth across every region of the state.

There is already momentum for Cascadia high-speed rail with $55 million in federal and Washington state funding to begin planning. Now is the time for Oregon to engage and invest in this effort for our future economic prosperity.

Cascadia High-Speed Rail Will Strengthen Oregon's Business Climate
High-speed rail will link Oregon to one of North America's fastest growing megaregions with a combined economy approaching the 18th largest in the world, comparable in size to countries like the Netherlands or Saudia Arabia. A one-hour Portland–Seattle connection and a two-hour Portland–Vancouver, British Columbia connection would create a unified labor and business market of more than 10 million people. This scale is essential for attracting corporate investment, research partnerships, and innovation-driven industries.

Oregon's economic competitiveness is constrained by chronic congestion and limited intercity mobility options. When combined with investments in Amtrak passenger rail, high-speed rail provides a resilient, electrified, and reliable backbone that ensures goods movement, business travel, and workforce mobility remain reliable even as climate and infrastructure pressures intensify.

Global evidence shows that high-speed rail corridors attract billions in private development around stations—commercial, industrial, and mixed-use. Oregon's cities can leverage this investment to accelerate housing production, innovation districts, and job centers without relying solely on public dollars.

High-Speed Rail Will Expand Workforce Access and Talent Mobility
Oregon employers consistently cite talent shortages as a barrier to growth. High-speed rail would effectively enlarge the state's labor pool by enabling workers to access jobs across the region without relocating.

High-speed rail is not just a Portland project. When combined with investments in passenger rail to communities like Eugene, Albany/Corvallis, and Salem, and integrated with TriMet's MAX, the system would connect Oregon's cities to major job centers while allowing people to choose more affordable housing. This expands opportunities for residents while helping employers fill critical roles.

Younger workers increasingly prioritize sustainable, multimodal transportation. A modern, electrified rail system strengthens Oregon's ability to attract and retain the next generation of talent while advancing the state's climate commitments.

Advancing High-Speed Rail Creates a Platform for Long-Term Prosperity
High-speed rail is projected to create over 200,000 jobs and unlock $355 billion in economic impact – supporting workers and attracting investment. Construction alone would create 38,000 high-quality, good-paying construction jobs. Once operational, the system would support ongoing employment in operations, maintenance, and station-area development.

The Cascadia corridor is uniquely positioned to leverage federal infrastructure funding, private capital, and cross-jurisdictional partnerships with Washington State and British Columbia. Oregon's participation ensures we receive our fair share of these investments rather than being left behind as our neighbor's advance.

As global competition intensifies, regions with fast, reliable, low-carbon mobility will outperform those without it. High-speed rail is a strategic hedge against economic stagnation, climate disruption, and infrastructure vulnerability. It ensures Oregon is a competitive, connected, and resilient place to do business.

As business and community leaders in Oregon we strongly encourage the Oregon Prosperity Council to recognize Cascadia high-speed rail as a foundational long-term economic development strategy. This project will expand opportunities for every region of the state, strengthen Oregon's business climate, and ensure that our workforce and industries can thrive in the decades ahead.
We stand ready to support the Council's work and to collaborate on advancing this transformative investment for Oregon's future.

Sincerely,

Keith Wilson, Mayor, City of Portland

Andrew Hoan
President & CEO, Portland Metro Chamber

Oregon Forest Industries Council

Memorandum to the Oregon Prosperity Council

Date: April 2026

Re: Strengthening Oregon's Forest Products Sector as a Foundation for Statewide Prosperity

Executive Summary

Oregon's forest products sector is one of the state's oldest and most important traded sectors and one of the few industries that simultaneously advances statewide prosperity, rural economic stability and Oregon's environmental objectives. Oregon's 10 million acres of working forestland (roughly a third of the total forestland in the state) proudly make Oregon the nation's top producer of lumber, plywood and engineered wood products like mass timber - roughly three quarters of the state's timber harvest comes from private and tribal forestland. The forest sector also supports more than 62,000 direct jobs with a higher than state average annual wage - a large percentage of which are in rural communities and do not require a post-secondary degree.[1]

The forest sector plays a unique role in Oregon's economy. As a traded sector, the forest products industry does not simply circulate money already inside the state. Close to 75 percent of the products made here are sold outside Oregon, injecting new dollars into local communities and supporting jobs in trucking, equipment repair, professional services, distribution and manufacturing. That traded-sector role is especially important in rural counties, where forest-sector jobs make up six percent of all employment, compared with two percent in metropolitan counties, and in some counties the sector accounts for more than one in ten jobs.[2]

The Oregon Prosperity Council recommendations should therefore treat the forest sector not as a narrow special interest, but as a test case for whether Oregon is serious about competitiveness. Oregon Business and Industry's (OBI's) recommendations correctly emphasize predictable regulation, manageable cost structures and a more durable business climate. OFIC agrees with that framework and urges the Council to apply it with specificity to Oregon's forest sector, where policy choices are made over decades, capital is mobile and market share can be lost slowly but permanently.[3]

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[1] OFRI, Oregon Forest Facts 2025-26, pp. 3, 5, 7, 14.
[2] Oregon Employment Department, "Oregon's Forest Sector Employment Totaled 62,300 in 2023" (2024); OFRI, Oregon Forest Facts 2025-26, p. 8.
[3] OBI, Recommendations to Governor Kotek's Prosperity Council (Apr. 2, 2026).

Recommendations for the Prosperity Council

1. Treat the forest products sector as a priority traded sector in the Council's final report.

The Council should expressly recognize the forest products sector as a core traded sector that supports statewide prosperity and rural economic and environmental resilience. That recognition should not be symbolic. It should guide tax, permitting, workforce, land use and housing recommendations toward preserving in-state production and manufacturing capacity.

Support:

- Oregon remains the nation's top producer of softwood lumber, plywood and engineered wood products like mass timber.[4]
- Even though privately-owned forestland makes up less than 50 percent of the forested land base, 72 percent of Oregon's 2023 timber harvest came from private lands.[5] Private landowners, family forest landowners, tribal forests and private-sector manufacturers play an outsized role in maintaining the strength of the sector. Without their sustained participation, mills, contractors, loggers and haulers that make up Oregon's forest economy cannot function at scale.[6]

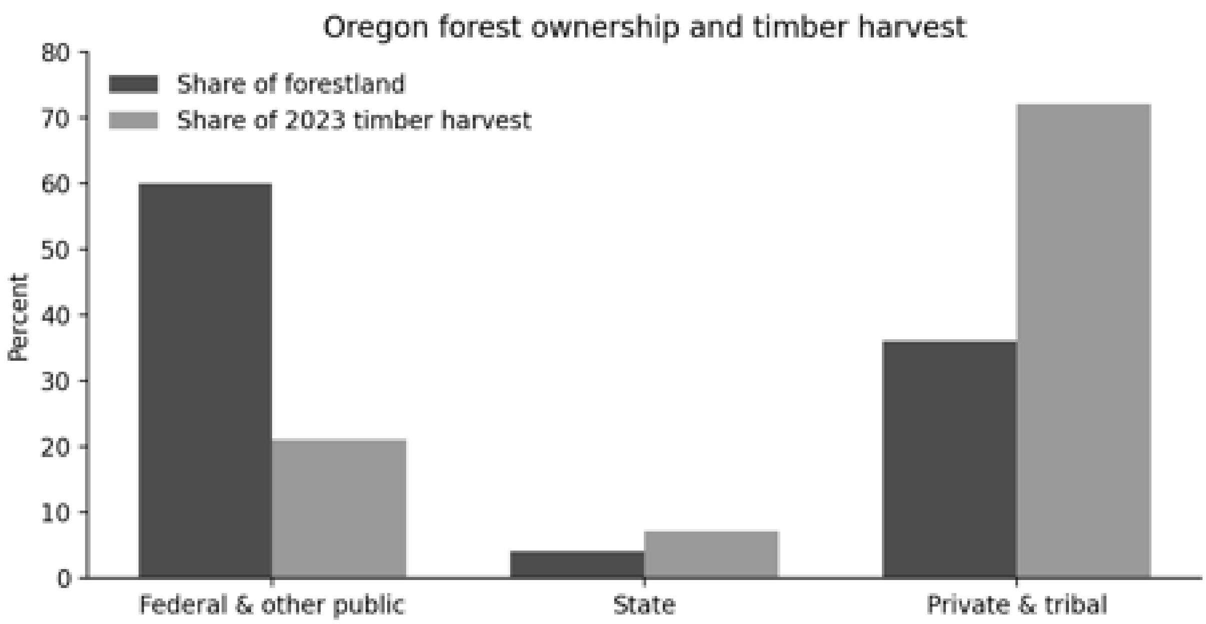

Figure 1. Private lands supply a much larger share of Oregon timber harvest than their share of the forest base.

[4] OFRI, Oregon Forest Facts 2025-26, p. 8.
[5] Id. at p. 3.
[6] Id. at p. 5.

- Oregon's forest sector directly employed 62,300 people in 2023 with an average annual wage of $71,900, compared with an average of about $68,283 for Oregon employment overall. In some rural counties forest sector wages paid as much as 77 percent more than the all-jobs average.[7]
- Prosperity in rural Oregon depends less on headline job counts than on the availability of year-round, stable employment that produces a viable living wage and benefits. These jobs cannot be replaced by seasonal, lower paying leisure, tourism and hospitality jobs that often do not provide the salary and benefits necessary to support a family.

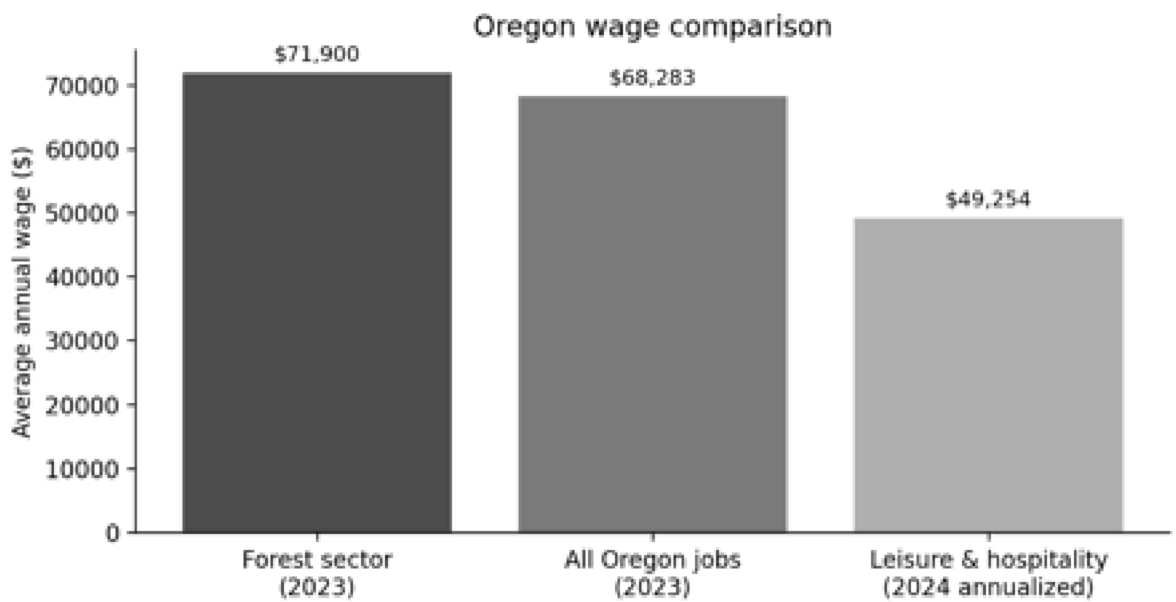

Figure 2. Forest-sector wages exceed the statewide average[8] and are well above leisure-and-hospitality earnings[9].

- Close to 75 percent of Oregon wood products are sold outside the state, bringing external revenue into the state economy rather than merely recirculating local spending. [10]
- Forest-sector employment includes far more than logging and sawmilling. It also includes trucking, reforestation, equipment maintenance, engineering, hydrology, management, dock work and wood products distribution. These are durable jobs that stabilize school district and local government tax bases and induce small business demand in communities.[11]

[7] Oregon Employment Department (2024); Oregon Blue Book, "Oregon's Economy: Wages."
[8] OFRI, Oregon Forest Facts 2025-26, p. 15.
[9] FRED series SMU41000007000000003A (BLS source); annualized at 2,080 hours.
[10] OFRI, "Oregon's forest economy."
[11] Oregon Employment Department (2024).

2. Endorse the OBI framework on cost structure and predictability and apply it specifically to forestry.

OFIC agrees with OBI's call for a more predictable regulatory environment, modernization of the Corporate Activities Tax (CAT) and a stronger competitiveness lens in policymaking. In forestry, the Council should recommend that major new rules be evaluated for technological and economic feasibility, interaction with existing programs and cumulative cost on a traded-sector supply chain.

Support:

- Rising production costs for a commodity producer such as a lumber mill, which must compete in national and international markets, often cannot pass increased local production costs onto the end consumer. When production costs in Oregon rise faster than in competing jurisdictions, the result is not simply thinner margins. Over time, such increases are likely to result in reduced market share, deferred capital investment and the gradual relocation of processing capacity out of state.[12]
- Cheaper wood products from places with far less stringent environmental protections are regularly taking market share away from Oregon landowners and manufacturers. Continual increases to the cost of operating in Oregon and regulatory and cost uncertainty is resulting in the certain replacement of Oregon products by products from less desirable regions – resulting in a net environmental cost and loss of Oregon jobs.
- Forest investments are made on long time horizons. Timberlands are managed over decades, and mills require large, fixed capital outlays that are difficult to redeploy once committed.[13]
- A single Oregon log may move through multiple taxable transactions before becoming lumber, plywood, engineered wood or a secondary product sold out of state. Each step can add cost before the product ever reaches a final market.[14]
- Therefore, the cumulative effect of policy choices is often more important than any single rule. The interaction and cumulative effect of taxes, labor costs, permitting risk, environmental rules, carbon policy and emerging land use constraints aimed at manufacturers together make Oregon incrementally less attractive than competing jurisdictions.[15]

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[12] OFRI, "Oregon's forest economy"; OBI (Apr. 2, 2026).
[13] OBI, "OBI Shares Recommendations with Prosperity Council" (Apr. 2, 2026)
[14] OBI (Apr. 2, 2026).
[15] OBI (Apr. 2, 2026); OFIC policy analysis.

- The result is older facilities are not modernized, and new lines are built elsewhere. Each decision to divert capital and invest elsewhere is a loss to the state's overall vitality and competitiveness.[16]

3. Recommend full and durable implementation of the Private Forest Accord.

The Council should emphasize that the PFA should be respected as a negotiated, science-based framework that builds on a long history of cooperative salmon and watershed restoration. Oregon should not signal to investors that even major settlements of this kind merely invite the next round of regulatory layering before the ink is dry.

Support:

- The Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds, launched in 1997, created a statewide framework for restoring salmon populations, water quality, habitat and watershed health through cooperation among agencies, private citizens, watershed councils and other organizations.
- Between 1997 and 2021, that voluntary program resulted in roughly 20,000 projects – half of which were privately funded - to improve aquatic habitat.[17]
- Since 2014, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality's Water Quality Index Report has confirmed that forestland provides the highest quality water of any land use in the state. [18]
- The PFA is the most recent iteration of a historical cooperative water quality strategy that has produced measurable gains over decades. It has formed the basis for more than 100 changes to Forest Practices Act rules, affecting around 10 million acres of private forestland. ODF itself has acknowledged just how monumental this update has been.[19]
- The 2024 annual report on the Oregon Coast Coho Conservation Plan reported an estimated 161,293 wild spawners, or 125 percent of the prior 34-year average.[20]
- This successful policy framework should be reinforced, not treated as a floor for perpetual ratcheting. **The prosperity problem in Oregon is not that the sector lacks environmental obligations. It is that businesses increasingly doubt whether agreed upon, science-based regulatory frameworks will actually be respected and afforded the durability they deserve.[21]**

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[16] OBI (Apr. 2, 2026); commodity-market effects stated as economic analysis.
[17] Oregon Watershed Restoration Inventory, 2022
[18] Oregon Water Quality Index Data Summary, March 2026
[19] Oregon Department of Forestry, "Private Forest Accord"; ODF, "Private Forest Accord Updates: Habitat Conservation Plan."
[20] ODFW, Oregon Coast Coho Conservation Plan 2024 Annual Report.
[21] OBI (Apr. 2, 2026).

4. Align housing and industrial policy by supporting wood and mass timber.

The Council should connect Oregon's housing agenda to Oregon's forest economy. That means supporting mass timber manufacture and utilization, encouraging public procurement of wood for appropriate projects and recognizing that higher delivered wood costs reduce the number of projects that pencil and therefore reduce housing starts and supply. Building on the strength of a longstanding traded sector to address a statewide need is the type of win-win Oregon strategy we need.[22]

Support:

- The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) reports that the average new single-family home uses roughly 15,000 board feet of framing lumber, more than 2,200 square feet of softwood plywood, and more than 6,800 square feet of oriented strand board (OSB).[23] This underscores the point that wood is not a marginal input to a house; it is a foundational one. When the delivered cost of those inputs rises materially, the economics of projects change. More expensive inputs contribute to higher overall building costs, lower affordability and constrained supply relative to demand – further exacerbating the problem.
- At the same time, Oregon has become a leader in advanced engineered wood. OFRI reports that 18 of the nation's 77 engineered-wood manufacturing plants are in Oregon, and state agencies have been promoting mass timber and modular housing as part of the state's housing strategy. [24]
- Public procurement that prioritizes mass timber construction where appropriate can help undergird Oregon manufacturing, attract and expand local design and construction expertise and create more demand for high value Oregon wood products.

5. Protect existing industrial uses in land use policy.

The Council should recommend land use modernization that preserves industrial lands and explicitly protects longstanding lawful industrial uses from being penalized when non-industrial uses are later sited nearby.

Support:

- A new land use problem is emerging in industrial communities: local planning decisions sometimes place new residential or "vulnerable uses" near long-established industrial operations, after which those existing operations face new scrutiny over truck traffic, air discharges, noise, emergency planning or ordinary industrial activity.[25] This new source of

[22] Oregon DLCD, "Mass Timber and Modular Housing Resources."
[23] NAHB
[24] OFRI, Oregon Forest Facts 2025-26, p. 8.
[25] OBI (Apr. 2, 2026).

uncertainty acts as a disincentive against the capital investment required to maintain competitiveness in national and international markets.
- Longstanding lawful industrial uses should not be penalized because uses that some believe are incompatible are subsequently sited nearby.
- Oregon can both create more housing and preserve industrial employment, but it cannot do so by curtailing ordinary industrial activity via regulation every time the planning map changes around an existing facility.[26]

6. Prioritize the active management of state forests

The Council should direct the state to prioritize leveraging its revenue-generating forest assets through active forest management on acres outside of habitat conservation area set-asides.

Support:

- Oregon's management of its state forest land base has historically been guided by three principles: (1) generation of revenue through timber harvest; (2) protection of critical habitat; and (3) promotion of recreational opportunities.
- In 2023, the state voluntarily set aside nearly half of its publicly-owned timberlands as habitat for various threatened and endangered species in the pursuit of a federally approved habitat conservation plan and incidental take permit. Notably, these "habitat conservation areas" (HCAs) are mostly off-limits to timber harvest, though they are still available for public recreation and other non-harvest uses.
- Sustainable timber harvest should be prioritized on those acres that fall outside of the HCAs, and no further constraints should be placed on active management of state forests in the name of habitat preservation or ecosystem services.
- Annual harvest targets should be clearly articulated and any shortfalls in anticipated harvest should be rolled forward to future years. This would provide greater predictability and certainty for purchasers of state timber and local governments who depend on the revenue from them.
- Prioritizing harvest on non-HCA acres not only supports the timber industry and local communities that receive a share of the revenue from state timber sales, but it also furthers the state's climate goals by maximizing the carbon sequestration potential of these forests through a continuous cycle of timber harvest, conversion of harvested timber into long-lived wood products, and renewal.

[26] OFIC planning analysis.

7. Support active management on federal forests and maintain the manufacturing base needed to perform that work.

The Council should view federal forest restoration and Oregon manufacturing capacity as interdependent. Without mills and associated infrastructure, large-scale restoration is more expensive and less feasible.

Support:

- Federal harvest in Oregon fell sharply in the late 1980s and early 1990s with changes in federal forest management, and because of that federal policy, many rural communities lost both jobs and associated public revenues. Local jobs and revenues are not all that was lost because of this misguided policy, however. Oregon State University notes that passive management of federal forestland has contributed to declining forest health and decreased fire resiliency for many federal lands, especially in the drier forests east of the Cascades.[27]
- If policymakers intend on addressing the wildfire crisis in the West with fuels reduction and prescribed fire, it cannot be done without local loggers, truckers, contractors and sawmills to remove and process wood fiber. When manufacturing capacity erodes because supply is unreliable or policy risk is too high, the state loses the very industrial infrastructure needed to make federal forest restoration financially and logistically feasible.[28]

8. Require carbon policy to evaluate substitution effects, leakage and disturbance risk.

Any recommendation on climate or carbon should account for the full lifecycle benefits of wood products and the risk of offshoring production to other states or countries. Oregon should not pursue carbon maximalism that weakens one of its most sustainable natural-resource sectors while increasing dependence on more emissions-intensive substitutes.

Support:

- Working forests and a robust forest products industry are key to any domestic or international climate change mitigation strategy.
- Forests are a natural climate solution, as actively growing forests pull carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and store carbon in woody vegetation. By sustainably managing forests, these benefits can be enhanced above and beyond the natural forest carbon cycle. Carbon sequestered by harvested trees from working forests is stored in wood products and used as a carbon-neutral energy source. Not only are primary wood products, wood

[27] OFRI, "Oregon's forest economy."
[28] OFRI, "Oregon's forest economy."

manufacturing byproducts and biomass-derived energy carbon neutral, but they provide a substitutionary benefit over the use of fossil fuel-intensive alternatives.[29]

- This cycle of carbon capture and storage from working forests can be indefinitely and sustainably maintained through a continuous process of adaptive reforestation (replanting and regrowth) and harvest, and is dependent on a thriving, local, integrated forest products industry. Growth of the forest products industry is essential for the social and economic wellbeing of Oregon communities and is key in maximizing the climate benefits of our state's forests.
- Policies that suppress active management on either state or private forests may increase stored carbon on paper while increasing the risk that some of that carbon is later lost through disturbance.[30]

Conclusion

The forest products sector occupies a unique place in Oregon. It is deeply rooted in rural and suburban communities, it is exposed to national and international competition, and it is able to contribute meaningfully to the advancement of Oregon's housing development and climate goals. Few industries touch this many aspects of state policy. For that reason, the Prosperity Council should not treat forest policy as separate from a statewide prosperity policy. In Oregon, they are intertwined.[31]

If the Council wants to recommend policies that materially improve Oregon's economic trajectory, it should include clear, sector-specific recommendations that reduce avoidable costs, improve predictability, protect existing industrial capacity and respect successful cooperative conservation frameworks. Doing so would not be a favor to one industry. It would be a concrete step toward a more prosperous and balanced Oregon economy across the entirety of the state. [32]

[29] OFRI, Oregon Forest Facts & Figures, carbon section.
[30] OFRI carbon materials; disturbance-risk discussion stated as policy analysis.
[31] OFRI materials; OBI recommendations.
[32] OBI (Apr. 2, 2026); OFIC policy analysis.

Dear Members of the Prosperity Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the Governor's Prosperity Roadmap and the development of a long-term economic strategy for Oregon. The wine industry appreciates the Council's work to identify actionable steps that will strengthen Oregon's competitiveness, support workforce development, and improve the overall business climate. As a cornerstone of Oregon's food and beverage economy, the wine industry plays a critical role in supporting rural communities, driving tourism, and contributing to the state's overall economic success with an estimated $8.5 billion annual economic impact.

The Oregon Winegrowers Association (OWA) is a member-driven advocacy organization advancing the interests of one of the state's most significant agricultural economic sectors. Our hundreds of winery and vineyard members represent over two-thirds of Oregon's wine production. For more than 40 years, OWA has advocated for policies that support the health, growth, and long-term sustainability of Oregon's wine industry.

Feedback gathered from wineries and vineyards across the state reflects a consistent message: while Oregon remains a desirable place to live and operate a wine business, the cumulative impact of rising costs, regulatory complexity, anti-alcohol messaging from state leaders and agencies, workforce challenges, and infrastructure constraints is placing increasing pressure on the industry's ability to grow and compete.

Business Climate
There is a general sentiment that Oregon is becoming a more difficult place to run a wine business and there is strong concern throughout the industry regarding anti-alcohol messaging and a lack of visible state support.

Recommended Actions:

- **Governor Kotek and state agencies should actively promote and champion Oregon's world-class wine industry** as a leading driver of tourism, employment, agriculture, and regional economic development. Oregon wine industry leaders should be consistently represented in state-led economic development, trade, and tourism efforts, including domestic and international trade missions, business recruitment activities, and official state events.
- The Oregon Health Authority's efforts should focus on addressing problem drinking and alcohol abuse, rather than discouraging moderate consumption broadly. **Elements of the Rethink the Drink campaign have unfairly targeted the wine industry and should be revised** to better reflect the distinction between abuse prevention and responsible, moderate consumption.
- **Increase the use and promotion of Oregon wine at official state events,** including at the Governor's residence Mahonia Hall.

- Designate **dedicated wine industry liaisons within key state agencies and the Governor's office**, including OLCC and OHA, to improve communication, coordination, and industry engagement, while ensuring Oregon wine is consistently integrated into statewide tourism and marketing efforts through Travel Oregon.

Cost of Doing Business

The overall cost structure in Oregon continues to be a concern. Members point to taxes, labor costs, regulatory requirements, and rising utility expenses as key drivers. Oregon has a high business tax burden, ranking among the top states for corporate taxes. Policies such as Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) are adding significant costs, in some cases rivaling or exceeding Corporate Activities Tax (CAT) obligations. At the same time, the rising cost of living is reducing discretionary spending, directly impacting tourism and hospitality sectors.

Recommended Actions:

- **Review cumulative tax burden** on Oregon businesses and individuals to ensure competitiveness. If Oregon considers a new tax structure, the wine industry would like to be part of the conversation.
- Reinstate **bonus depreciation** for machinery and equipment.
- **Reduce unnecessarily high glass-related fees within the EPR Program**, which are creating significant cost pressures for wine producers despite strong existing glass recycling rates prior to enactment of the Recycling Modernization Act.

Regulatory Environment and Permitting

The wine industry is highly regulated, and our members consistently identify regulatory complexity and permitting as a primary challenge. Small wineries especially face difficulty maintaining compliance across multiple state agencies with small staff.

Recommended Actions:

- **Preserve the current alcohol regulatory model** where the state controls liquor sales, including for Ready-to-Drink spirit-based cocktails.
- **Support for county land use planning efforts** to integrate state law and rule changes into local code.
- Enable **flexibility for water users and expedite permit processing** at OWRD.
- Support **ongoing state investment in invasive species management** in partnership with industry.

Workforce Challenges
Workforce shortages remain a persistent issue, particularly for seasonal vineyard and winery labor and hospitality roles. Immigration uncertainty, limited training pipelines, and evolving compliance requirements all contribute to these challenges.

Recommended Actions:
- Advocate for **federal immigration reforms and visa program improvements** that support agricultural labor stability.
- Expand and extend the **agricultural overtime tax credit** to help offset increased costs.
- Expand **workforce housing and childcare access** in rural areas.

Infrastructure Needs
Transportation infrastructure continues to impact both business operations and visitor access, particularly in more rural wine regions. Road conditions and connectivity directly affect the movement of our product, employee access, and the overall visitor experience. Broadband access is also critical for modern business operations, including reservations, sales, compliance and marketing.

Recommended Actions:
- Increase funding for **rural road maintenance and improvement**, prioritizing key agricultural and tourism corridors.
- Expand **state investment in rural broadband infrastructure** to ensure reliable, high-speed internet access.
- Create targeted **grant or matching programs** for infrastructure improvements that support tourism and agriculture.

The Council has a meaningful opportunity to advance policies that not only support emerging industries but also strengthen long-standing economic drivers like Oregon's wine sector. Many of these challenges are not unique to the wine industry, but they are particularly pronounced in a sector that sits at the intersection of agriculture, manufacturing, alcohol production and sales, and hospitality. Thoughtful, targeted action in these areas will improve the state's competitiveness, support rural economies, and ensure the continued success of one of Oregon's signature industries.

We appreciate the Council's consideration of this input and look forward to continued engagement as the strategy moves toward implementation.

Sincerely,

Alex Sokol Blosser
OWA President

Jana McKamey
OWA Executive Director

CC: Business Oregon, Oregon Wine Board, Travel Oregon, Oregon Liquor Control Commission

Coalition of
Oregon Public Universities

MEMORANDUM

To:	Curtis Robinhold, Renee James
	Co-Chairs, Governor's Prosperity Council
From:	Oregon Public University Presidents
Date:	May 13th, 2026
Subject:	Prosperity Council Higher Education Roundtable Follow-Up

Dear Co-Chairs Robinhold and James and Members of the Governor's Prosperity Council,

Thank you for your time and for your interest in the role that Oregon's public universities play in creating a prosperous future for our state. We greatly appreciate your work towards collaboratively building that future.

As we discussed, we firmly believe that public universities are foundational to Oregon's current and future economy. If we are serious about improving Oregon's economic outlook, accessible, affordable, high-quality, industry-aligned higher education must be included every step of the way.

Oregon's public universities play a major economic role, generating over $10 billion in annual impact (or nearly $20 billion when including OHSU's academic and hospital operations) and producing more than 20,000 graduates each year who benefit from higher earnings, lower unemployment, and stronger career prospects. Some important figures to note include:

- Approximately 85% of personal income tax revenue is paid by those with bachelor's degrees or higher.
- Industry surveys consistently rank access to a skilled and educated workforce as the top factor in site selection for large, high-wage employers.

However, Oregon's public four-year universities face growing financial pressure, as costs, especially benefits, are rising faster than revenues despite efficient operations.

At the same time, Oregon significantly underfunds its public universities, ranking 46th nationally in per-student appropriations. This gap has shifted more of the financial burden onto students, leading to higher tuition, with students now covering about two-thirds of costs compared to the state's one-third.

Universities want to be part of the solution. We should be a key part of Oregon's prosperity and business development plans. Across the nation, we see that states with robust business climates include their public universities as active partners in these efforts. Workforce and innovation are critical for companies and essential in recruiting and retaining businesses. We all are willing and ready to partner in these efforts.

Specifically, we want to highlight the five following recommendations:

- **Sustain and strengthen base funding for public universities**
    - Ensure Public University Support Fund, Statewide Public Services, State Programs, and student financial aid are sufficient to provide stability of core programs
    - Maintain Oregon's long-term talent pipeline without further placing the burden on students and families
    - Support universities in managing costs from increasing retirement and healthcare obligations

- **Active university engagement in economic development planning**
    - Formally include public universities in state programs for:
        - Industry recruitment
        - Regional planning
        - Workforce development boards
        - Regional economic development strategies

- **Develop workforce-aligned investment pools**
    - Flex Future Ready Oregon programs and create targeted funding streams for universities to:
        - Expand capacity in high-demand programs
        - Launch rapid credentialing and reskilling programs
        - Respond quickly to employer needs

- **Create a statewide work-based learning initiative**
    - Establish incentives (grants or tax credits) for employers to provide:
        - Paid internships
        - Apprenticeships
        - Cooperative education opportunities
    - Focus particularly on small and mid-sized businesses and rural communities.

- **Invest in research and innovation through existing programs**
    - Maintain and expand funding for programs such as the University Innovation Research Fund, which:
        - Attract federal and private R&D dollars
        - Support commercialization and startup activity
        - Strengthen Oregon's position in emerging industries

We recognize the difficult budget environment that the state faces, and we want to emphasize that public universities, and indeed these recommendations, serve as multipliers for state resources. For every $1 spent on public universities, over $10 is returned to the state's economy.

Again, we thank you for your time and consideration of these proposals. Oregon's public universities stand ready to serve the state and your efforts in any way we can. We are optimistic about the critical role universities can play in renewing Oregon's economic promise.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to any of us if we can be of further assistance.

Ann Cudd
President, Portland State University

Kelly Ryan
President, Eastern Oregon University

Jayathi Murthy
President, Oregon State University

Karl Scholz
President, University of Oregon

Jesse Peters
President, Western Oregon University

Nagi Naganathan
President, Oregon Institute of Technology

Rick Bailey
President, Southern Oregon University

Shereef Elnahal
President, Oregon Health & Science University

From: Murthy, Jayathi Y <jayathi.murthy@oregonstate.edu>
Date: Wednesday, 13 May 2026 15:09
To: Lois Cho <admin@getchowines.com>
Cc: Fast, Katie <katie.fast@oregonstate.edu>
Subject: OSU and the economic health and prosperity of Oregon

Dear Lois,

I understand that Governor Kotek's Prosperity Council is coming to the end of its deliberations. As it prepares to release its findings, I thought it would be important to convey to you the strategies that OSU feels would be most beneficial for the economic development of the state of Oregon.

First, let me say that the economic health and prosperity of Oregon is critical to the success and future of Oregon State University. OSU not only wants but believes it is critical that we be a coordinated part of Oregon's economic development strategy. We have observed that states with robust business climates designate universities as active partners. We are eager to assist in development of strategies and/or new business and retention efforts.

I list below the strategies that OSU considers to be most important for workforce and economic development:

1. **Sustain public university budgets for the benefit of Oregon students**
   Approximately 85% of personal income tax revenue is paid by those with bachelor's degrees or higher. Affordability is the biggest hindrance facing potential university students. Oregon public universities have the highest tuition in the western region due to low state investment (46th in the nation) and higher than industry benefits costs. Addressing these challenges will directly impact students' ability to access a four-year degree. Accordingly, Oregon

   - Should invest in the entire education continuum, including K12, community colleges, and public universities.
   - Assist universities through policies and/or investments to assist with the growing employee benefit costs that are outside of the universities control.

2. **Develop workforce-aligned investment pools**
   Industry surveys consistently rank access to a skilled and educated workforce as the top factor in site selection for large, high-wage employers. Therefore, Oregon should

   - Create targeted funding streams for universities to:

     1. Expand capacity in high-demand programs

     2. Launch rapid credentialing and reskilling programs

     3. Respond quickly to employer needs
   2. Create a statewide work-based learning initiative be establishing incentives (grants or tax credits) for employers to provide:

      1. Paid internships

      2. Apprenticeships

      3. Cooperative education opportunities

3. **Bolster Oregon's Research and Innovation economy**

The state of Oregon should

a. Annually fund the University Innovation Research Fund, which provides matching funds for large federal innovation and economic development grants, with at least $10M per year ($20M for a biennium).
b. Extend the December 31, 2027, sunset of the University Venture Development Fund tax credit, which supports entrepreneurship programs, provides opportunities to apply research to commercial activities, and funds efforts to transform novel concepts into products and services. This is how new ideas on campuses become new businesses for the state.
c. Provide startup and early operational/staffing support of $1M for the Southern Willamette Valley Innovation Corridor to have the effort officially endorsed and launched by the state.
d. Provide bridge funding of $1M for the Corvallis Microfluidics (CorMic) Tech Hub, which is a joint effort between OSU, University of Oregon, and Oregon Health Sciences University and an economic engine that stimulates, drives, and supports the commercialization of microfluidics-connected technologies to meet national security goals.

We would be delighted to work with you and the Prosperity Council to help flesh out these ideas further and to help implement them as plans mature. And thank you for all your hard work on the Council on behalf of our state and its communities.

Sincerely,

Jayathi

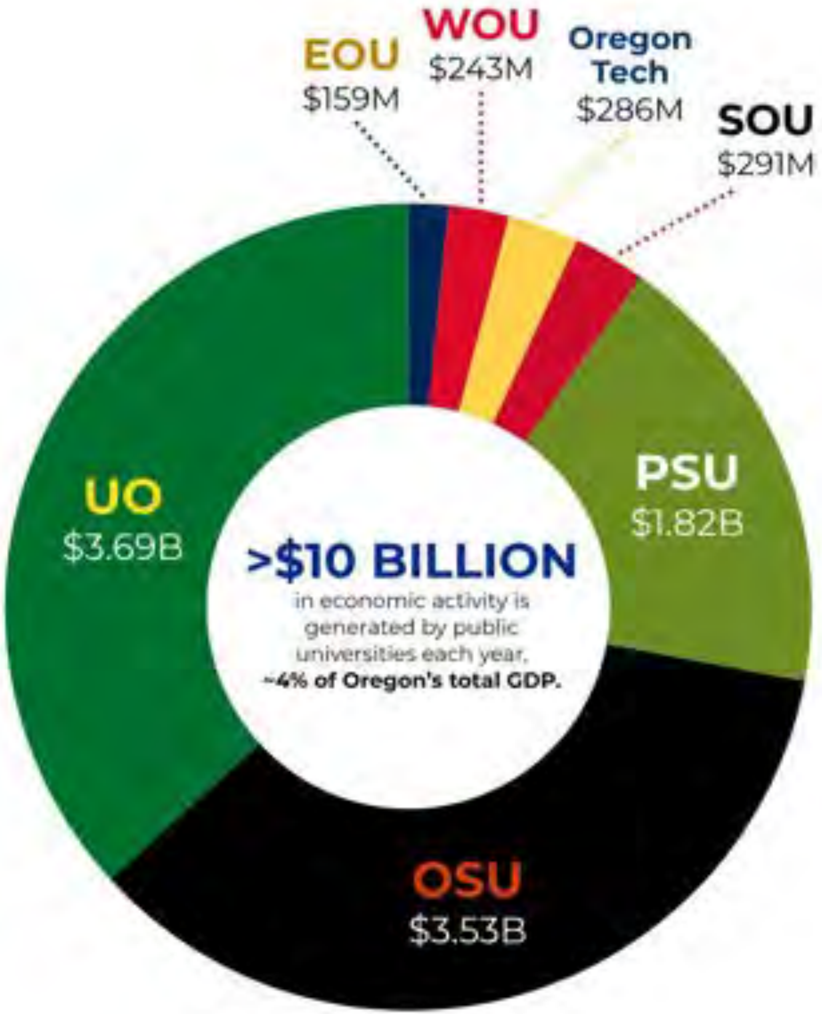
Jayathi Y. Murthy
President
Oregon State University | 638 Kerr Administration Building | Corvallis, OR 97331
Executive Assistant: Brad Canfield | brad.canfield@oregonstate.edu

Universities are Delivering for Oregon

- Delivering on the state's **40/40/20** goals
- Actively engaged in **partnerships** with other universities, community colleges, government, and industry partners
- Direct statewide **impact** on economy and prosperity

Statewide Impact

- More than $10 billion in annual economic impact
- 30,000+ employees
- Nearly half a million alumni in Oregon



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Return on Investment

$1 = $10

For every $1 the state invests, Public Universities return $10 in economic impact.

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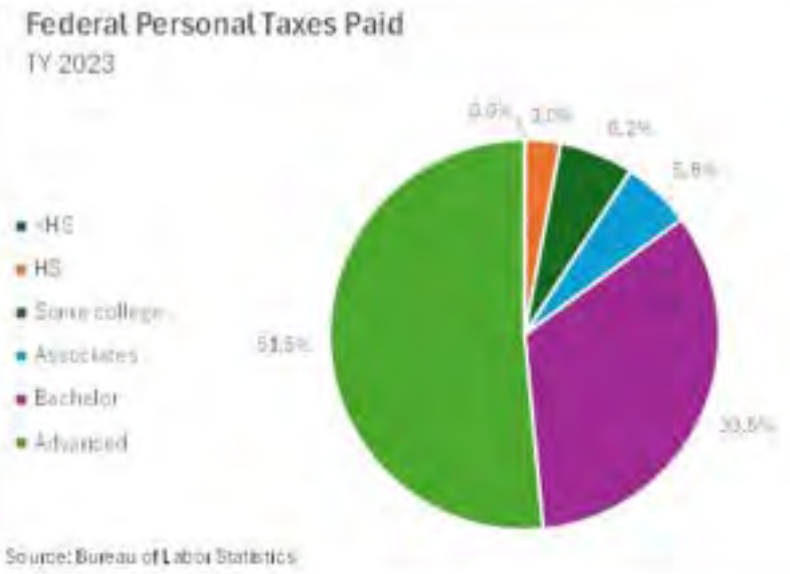
Oregon Public Universities

Higher Earnings = Better Public Benefit

85% of income taxes are paid by those with a bachelor's degree or higher



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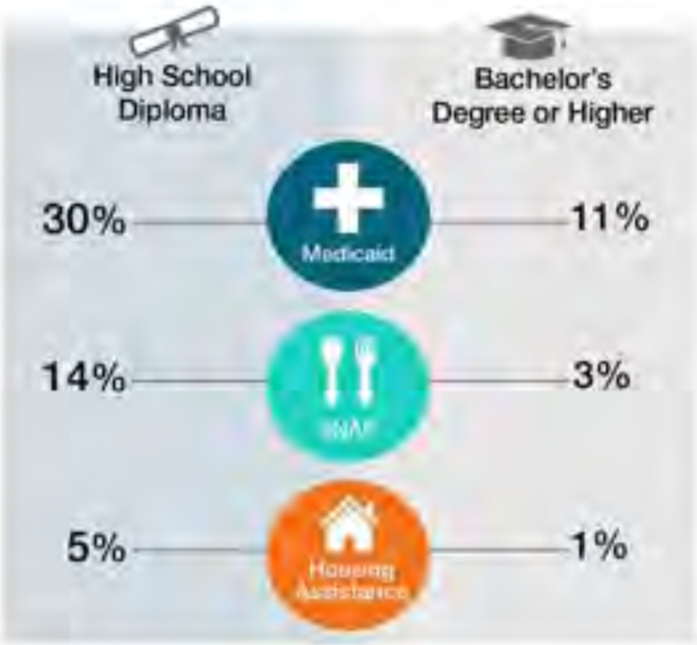
NACUBO

College Grads Less Likely to Rely on Public Assistance

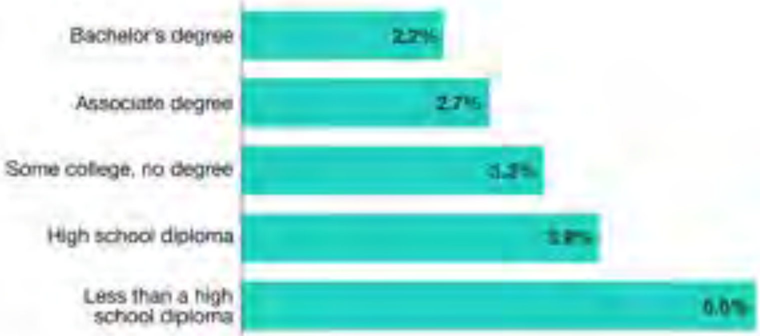
Percent of individuals age 25 and older living in households that participated in various public assistance programs, by education level, 2021



Source: "Education Pays 2023," Figure 2.17, The College Board, 2023.

Degree Holders Are Less Likely to Be Unemployed

Unemployment rates by educational attainment, 2023



The Future of Work

- By 2031, 72% of jobs in the US will require postsecondary education and/or training.
- Although many employers are dropping degree requirements from job postings, they are still hiring candidates with degrees.
- The highest-growth job sectors require degrees offered at Oregon Public Universities

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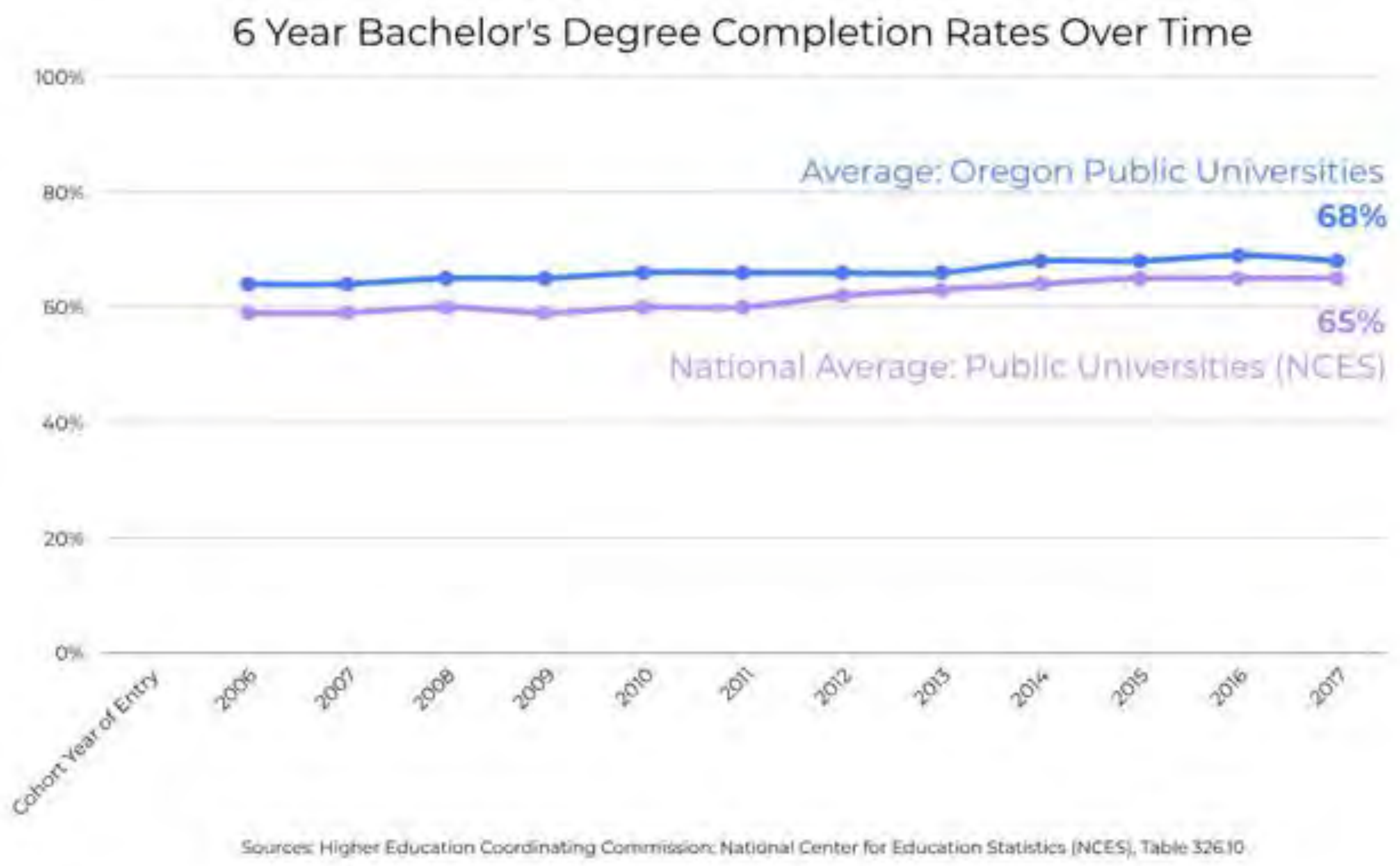
Fastest-Growing Occupations in Oregon, 2024-2034

(Minimum of 1,000 jobs in 2024)

Occupation	2024 Employment	10-Year Job Growth Rate	Median Hourly Wage, 2025
Nurse Practitioners	2,642	45.0%	$71.41
Data Scientists	2,755	32.5%	$52.40
Physician Assistants	2,096	30.7%	$73.65
Medical and Health Services Managers	6,285	29.4%	$66.37
Psychiatric Technicians	1,654	28.1%	$25.50
Ophthalmic Medical Technicians	1,470	27.6%	$24.07
Information Security Analysts	1,372	26.4%	$58.78
Marriage and Family Therapists	1,252	24.9%	$39.45
Veterinarians	1,742	23.7%	$50.82
Substance Abuse, Behavioral Disorder, and Mental Health Counselors	6,945	23.5%	$34.40
Operations Research Analysts	2,624	21.8%	$49.01
Logisticians	3,149	21.5%	$44.03
Architectural and Civil Drafters	1,435	20.3%	$33.30
Diagnostic Medical Sonographers	1,392	19.6%	$53.44
Couriers and Messengers	2,866	19.5%	$20.56

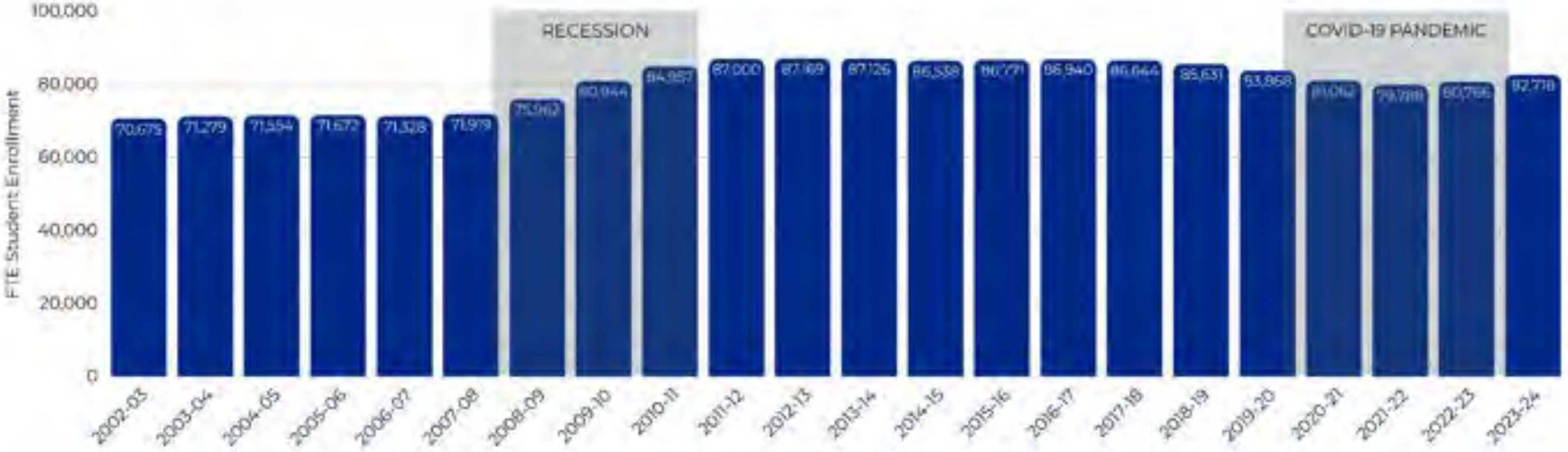
Source: Oregon Employment Department


6 Year Bachelor's Degree Completion Rates Over Time
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
Average: Oregon Public Universities
68%
65%
National Average: Public Universities (NCES)
Cohort Year of Entry
2006
2007
2008
2009
2010
2011
2012
2013
2014
2015
2016
2017
Sources: Higher Education Coordinating Commission; National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Table 326.10

Funding Context

Oregon Public University Enrollment Over Time

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) Students



Source: Higher Education Coordinating Commission. Includes all students who were enrolled during the academic year.

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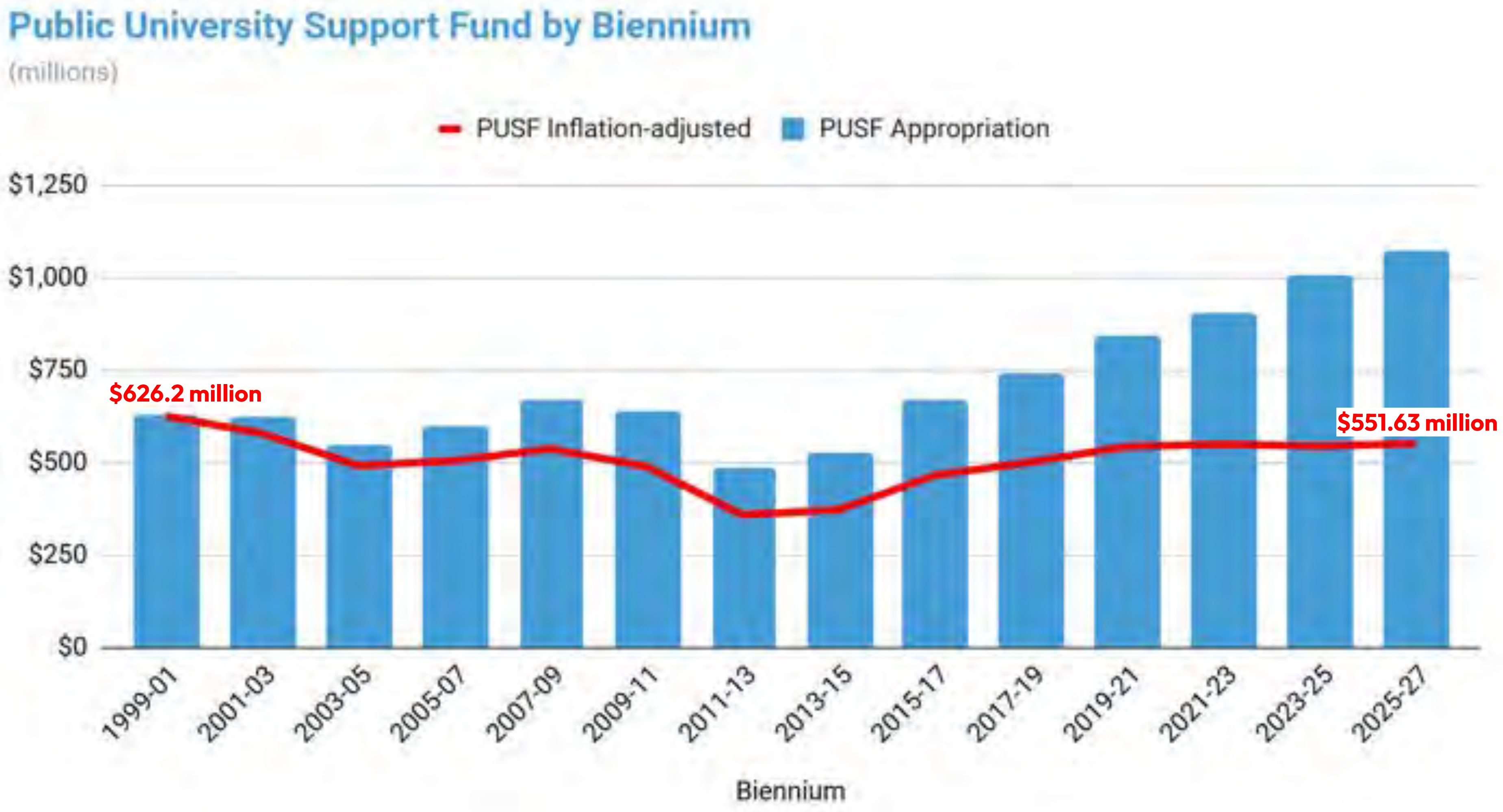
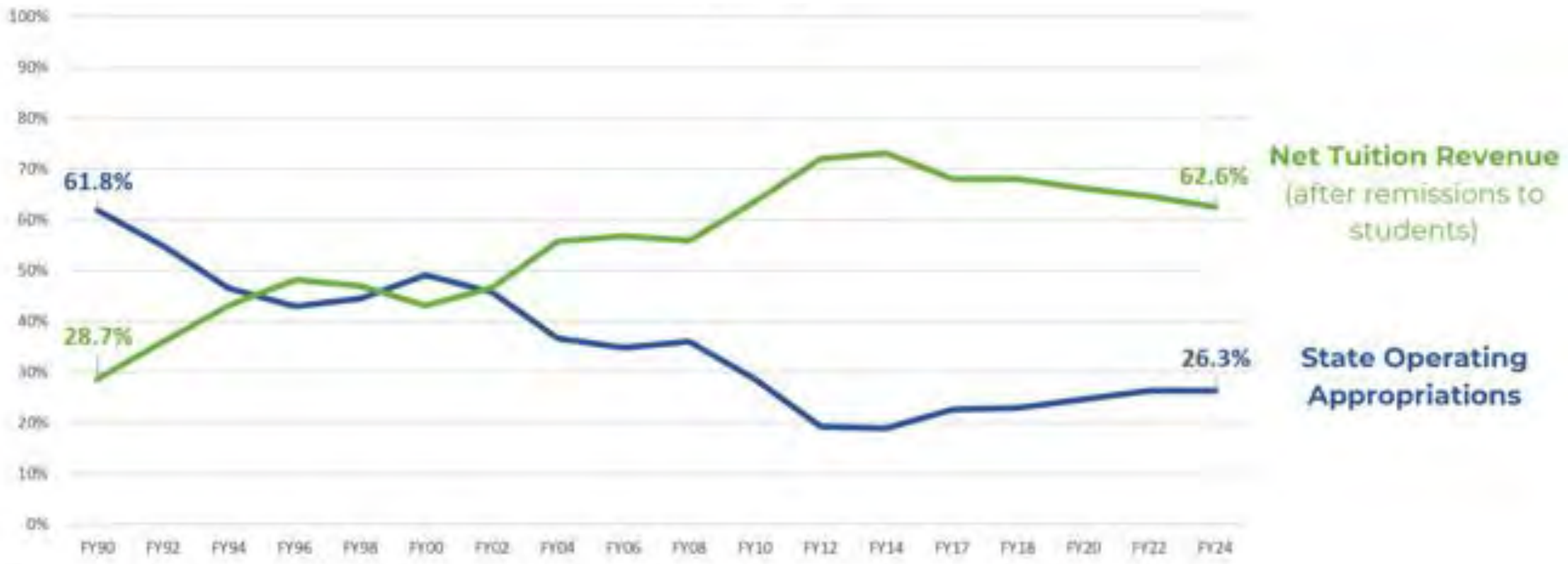

Public University Support Fund by Biennium
(millions)
PUSF Inflation-adjusted
PUSF Appropriation
$1,250
$1,000
$750
$500
$250
$0
$626.2 million
$551.63 million
1999-01
2001-03
2003-05
2005-07
2007-09
2009-11
2011-13
2013-15
2015-17
2017-19
2019-21
2021-23
2023-25
2025-27
Biennium

State vs Student Share of Public University Funding



Source: Oregon University System Factbook 2013; HECC E&G Survey

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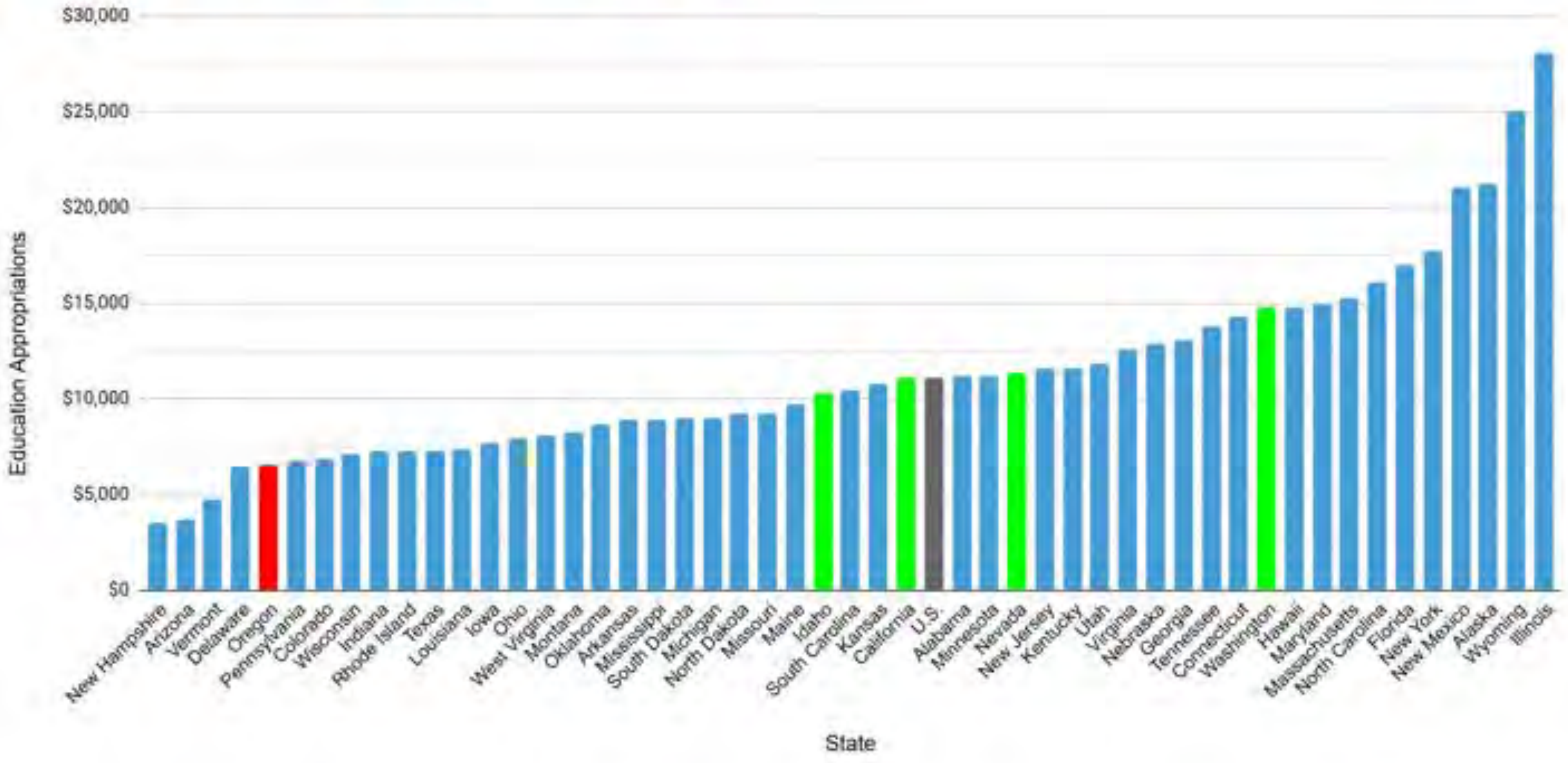
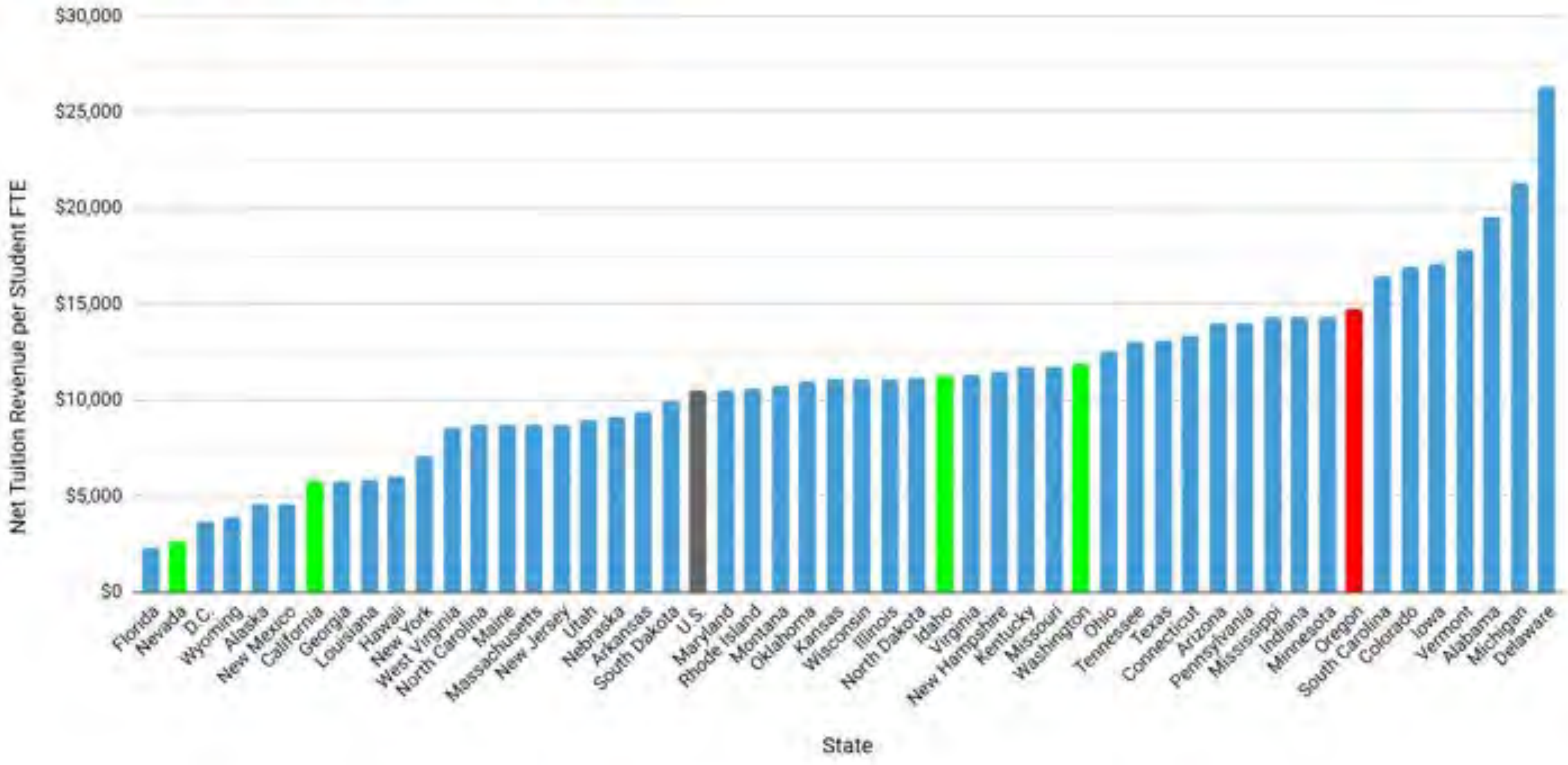
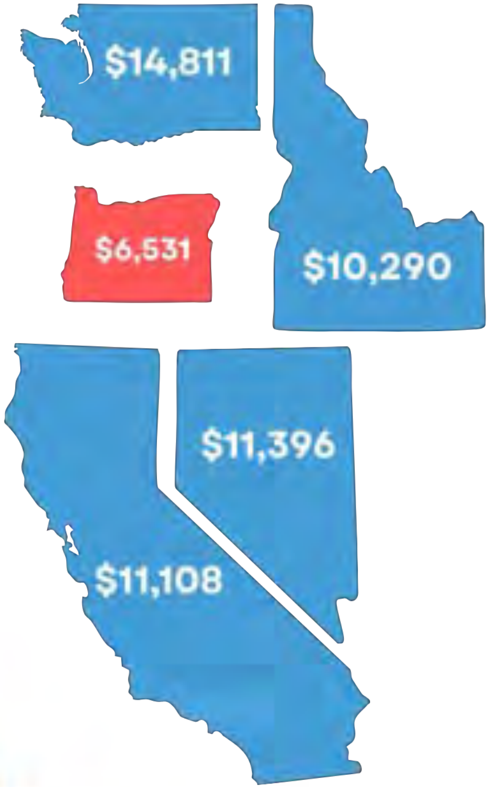
Four Year Education Appropriations Per FTE



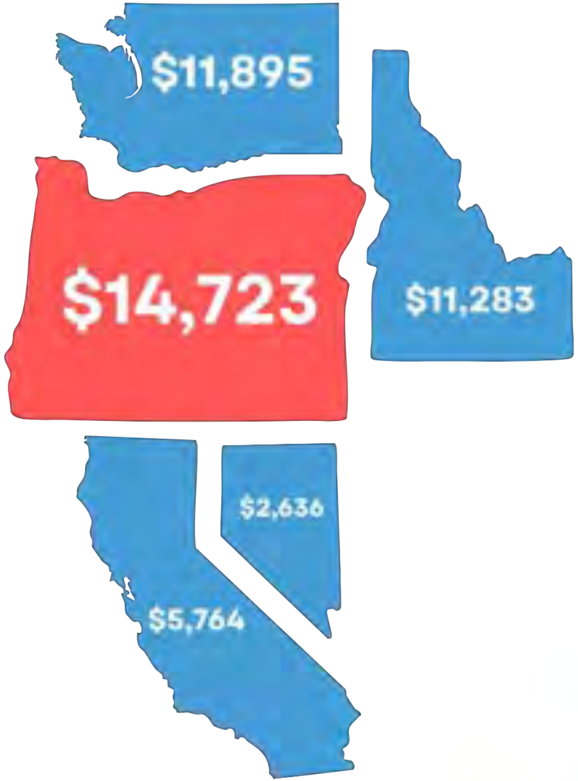
Net Four-Year Tuition Revenue per FTE



State Appropriation per FTE



Net Tuition per FTE



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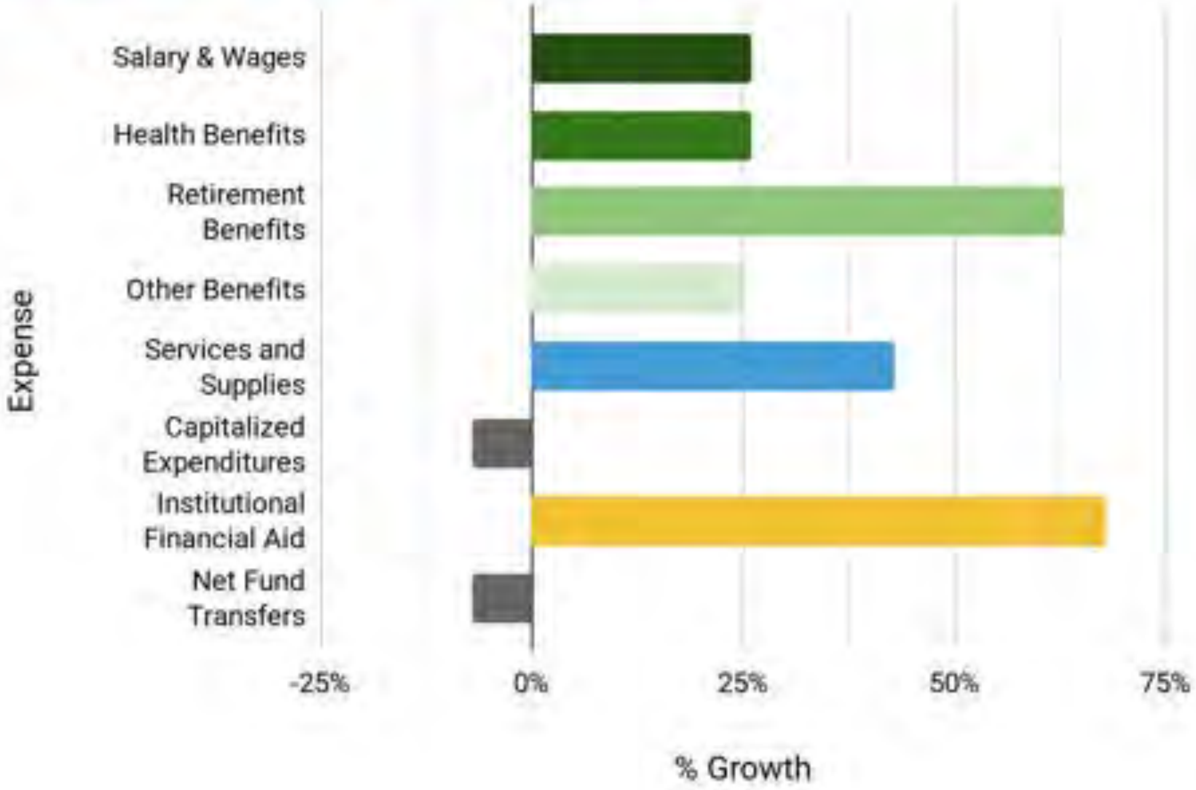
E&G Cost Growth (2017-2025)



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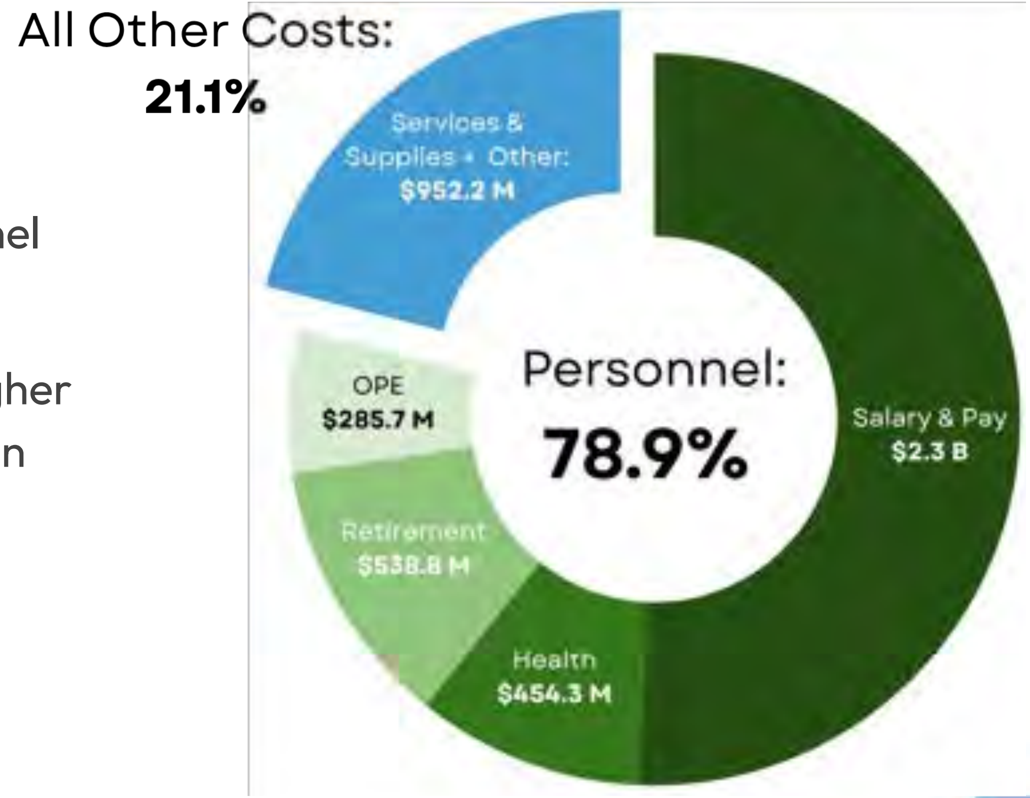
Our Costs

- Nearly 80% towards personnel

- OPE costs rising quickly – higher than inflation and higher than revenue



OPU Coalition of Oregon Public Universities

May 15, 2026

Governor's Prosperity Council
State of Oregon
Curtis Robinhold and Renee James, Co-chairs

Re: Accelerating prosperity through Oregon's natural and working lands and local/state capacity to effectively plan for the future

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Governor's Prosperity Council,

On behalf of the Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew), thank you for the Prosperity Council's (Council) work to advance actionable recommendations under the Governor's Prosperity Roadmap[1] and for the opportunity to provide feedback as the Council moves forward.

Pew's U.S. Conservation project advances commonsense solutions that address the impacts of a changing environment on nature and communities, in collaboration with policy makers, Tribes, and stakeholders. This project works on several related issues: protection of lands and waters, climate-ready management of species and habitats, restoring terrestrial and aquatic connectivity, a focus on greenhouse gas (GHG) sinks like coastal wetlands and peatlands, and preparing communities for climate impacts.[2] Our U.S. Conservation program's interest in the Council's work relate to Oregon's natural and working lands, Oregon's Statewide Land Use Planning Goals, and their relationship to recent legislative and administrative actions that have bearing on the Roadmap and the Council's strategic goals. Accordingly, we encourage the Council to include the following in its final recommendations to the Governor by June 30, 2026:

1: Call for an independent analysis of Oregon state and local permit operations to evaluate the net benefits of permitting systems for Oregonians, including the extent to which current processes support public trust, environmental stewardship, economic development, and timely decision-making. The analysis should also identify opportunities to reduce unnecessary delays and improve coordination, which could supplement implementation of HB 4084 (2026).[3]

2: Encourage the state of Oregon to reinvest in state and local planning capacity, including in specialized programs like Oregon's Coastal Management Program (OCMP). This initiative can help build Oregon back from the decades of divestment in local planning that has created barriers to predictable permitting outcomes in cities and counties.

3: Align the Council's recommendations with the Governor's recent climate-focused executive orders, including Executive Order 25-26 directing state agencies "to take urgent action to promote the resilience of our communities and natural and working lands and waters."[4] This alignment may reveal multi-benefit

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[1] State of Oregon, Governor Tina Kotek, Oregon's Prosperity Roadmap, December 2025, https://www.oregon.gov/gov/Documents/Oregon's_Prosperity_Roadmap_December_2025.pdf
[2] The Pew Charitable Trusts, U.S. Conservation Project, accessed 5/11/26, https://www.pew.org/en/projects/us-conservation
[3] Oregon State Legislature, House Bill 4084: Relating to economic development, 2026 Regular Session, https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2026R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB4084/Enrolled
[4] State of Oregon, Governor Tina Kotek, Executive Order No. 25-26, October 2025, https://www.oregon.gov/gov/eo/eo-25-26.pdf

policy pathways that balance conservation, development, and resilience needs as Oregon plots a course for future prosperity.

4: Demonstrate engagement with the Oregon Department of Energy's Natural Climate Solutions program.[5] The Council's final recommendations will benefit from this connection as it may surface opportunities to enhance the state's existing workforce on natural and working lands.

1: Call for an independent analysis of Oregon state and local permit operations to evaluate the net benefits of permitting systems for Oregonians, including the extent to which current processes support public trust, environmental stewardship, economic development, and timely decision-making. The analysis should also identify opportunities to reduce unnecessary delays and improve coordination, which could supplement implementation of HB 4084 (2026).

Governor Kotek's Prosperity Roadmap states a need to "streamline and/or accelerate permitting"[6] and indeed the Legislature has acted on this in the 2026 session with the passage of HB 4084 (2026).[7] Section 5 of this legislation requires eight state agencies to catalog all permits in their jurisdiction that are "related to or have an impact on economic development projects" and identify opportunities to streamline the approval process for those permits.[8]

As a supplement to this effort, Pew encourages the Council to call for an independent analysis of Oregon state and local permitting operations to evaluate how permitting affects prosperity outcomes of Oregonians. Depending on the scope, such an analysis could reveal challenges that exist upstream of the permit-by-permit processes themselves. Our organization is aware of one such upstream challenge: limited local and state capacity for community-led land use planning that is required by Oregon's Statewide Land Use Planning Goals�[9] state values. For more on this, see recommendation 2 below.

We appreciate the effort by the Governor's office and Prosperity Council to solicit feedback from Oregonians about "insights, experiences, and ideas about our collective economic future" which garnered 1,039 responses.[10] Concepts of permitting delays, zoning rules, and/or regulatory burden were mentioned

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[5] State of Oregon, Department of Energy – Natural Climate Solutions program, accessed 4/3/2026, https://www.oregon.gov/energy/energy-oregon/Pages/NaturalClimateSolutions.aspx

[6] State of Oregon, Governor Tina Kotek, Oregon's Prosperity Roadmap, December 2025, pages 4-5, https://www.oregon.gov/gov/Documents/Oregon's_Prosperity_Roadmap_December_2025.pdf

[7] Oregon State Legislature, *House Bill 4084: Relating to economic development*, 2026 Regular Session, https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2026R1/Downloads/MeasureDocument/HB4084/Enrolled

[8] *Ibid.* Agencies subject to Section 5 are the Departments of Transportation, Land Conservation and Development, Energy, State Lands, Environmental Quality, Water Resources, Agriculture, and the office of the State Historic Preservation Officer.

[9] Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, Oregon Planning, accessed 4/16/2026, https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/op/pages/index.aspx

[10] State of Oregon, Governor Tina Kotek, Oregon's Prosperity Council, "Prosperity Council Survey Reponses_2026_03_25", accessed 4/20/26, https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1i2GEb49JUA6XEj7z-yUHN6BPA0nLHqi9BY05UZJY1dQ/edit?pli=1&gid=728315544#gid=728315544

by 15% of respondents (159 individuals or individuals representing an organization) across 293 separate narrative responses given that multiple participants mentioned these concepts more than once. Given this modest but significant number, coupled with the need for a deeper analysis of factors influencing prosperity outcomes, Pew recommends to the Governor's office the completion of an independent analysis of Oregon state and local operations to determine if permitting processes and decision-making are key limiting factors for the prosperity of Oregonians. This analysis should examine both the benefits and constraints of existing permitting systems, including which elements of permitting processes may be limiting prosperity, for whom, and under what circumstances.

2: Encourage the state of Oregon to reinvest in state and local planning capacity, including in specialized programs like Oregon's Coastal Management Program (OCMP). This initiative can help build Oregon back from the decades of divestment in local planning that has created barriers to predictable permitting outcomes in cities and counties.

Oregon's statewide Land Use Goals and planning framework are intentionally structured to front-load development and land use decisions through proactive planning (i.e. comprehensive plans, zoning, and mapped inventories), so that individual permits can be reviewed efficiently and consistently.[11] The Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD)'s Land Use Planning Program provides predictability for long term investment by clearly allocating land in each community for housing, industry, utilities, and resource protection in advance of specific permitting decisions, while assuring conservation and development values are balanced for communities to thrive. Key decisions about where to locate development are intended to be made in advance of permitting decisions, with statutory timelines – 120 days for local action[12] and 77 days for Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) decisions[13] – used to advance permitting decisions and provide regulatory certainty. When these foundational tools are current and well supported, permitting processes can move efficiently and with less risk for developers.

However, outdated plans and codes, incomplete inventories, unresolved infrastructure questions, and limited staff capacity force local governments to resolve planning issues during permit review—creating delay and uncertainty for applicants. The State itself recognizes this challenge, identifying technical assistance and planning grants as "key elements" of the statewide program.[14] Nevertheless, many cities and counties have gone decades without sustained funding to support long-term planning, particularly in rural communities. This has resulted in strained capacity, outdated plans, and a reliance on small, piecemeal grant

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[11] Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, Oregon Planning, accessed 4/16/2026, https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/op/pages/index.aspx

[12] Oregon Revised Statute 227.181: Deadline for final action following remand of land use decision. Accessed 4/16/2026, https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/ors/ors227.html#:~:text=227.181%20Deadline%20for%20final%20action,of%20Appeals%20under%20ORS%20197.830

[13] Oregon Revised Statute 197.830 Review procedures; standing; fees; deadlines; rules; issues subject to review; attorney fees and costs; publication of orders; mediation; tracking of reviews. Accessed 4/16/2026, https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/bills_laws/ors/ors197.html#:~:text=197.830%20Review%20procedures%3B%20standing%3B%20fees%3B,orders%3B%20mediation%3B%20tracking%20of%20reviews

[14] Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, Biennial Report to the Legislature, 2023-2025, page 1, https://www.oregonlegislature.gov/citizen_engagement/Reports/DLCD2023-25BiennialReport.pdf

funds to conduct planning projects, thereby hindering the efficiency of permit processing. More robust and stable investments are needed to resource local governments to meaningfully plan.

Example: Oregon's Coastal Management Program—powerful, effective, and under-resourced

Oregon's Coastal Management Program (OCMP)[15] illustrates the capacity challenge clearly. OCMP is a federally approved program, housed within DLCD, that coordinates 11 state agencies and all coastal cities and counties to balance development and conservation while supporting community livability and economic activity. The program provides coastal planning assistance, hazard mitigation tools, data, grants, and federal consistency review—services that are critical to timely, legally durable permitting in coastal communities given planners are responsible for upholding distinct coastal Land Use Goals in addition to all other Land Use Planning Goals.[16]

In fall 2025, Pew partnered with DLCD/OCMP to cohost coastal resilience workshops in Pacific City and Coos Bay.[17] These workshops brought together planning, public works, and community development staff from 14 coastal cities and Tillamook, Lincoln, and Coos Counties. Participants consistently emphasized that:

- Coastal hazards and changing environmental conditions are increasing faster than local capacity to plan for them.
- Proactive, community-led planning creates certainty for residents, businesses, conservation interests, and developers alike.
- Despite admirable increases in DLCD capacity around housing, decades of disinvestment in local planning capacity—combined with heavy reliance on strained and uncertain federal funding—have left many coastal jurisdictions struggling to meet both hazard and land use obligations.

With additional capacity, OCMP could more proactively assist jurisdictions with plan updates, code alignment, and preapplication clarity—reducing delays for developers, local governments, and state agencies while maintaining Oregon's coastal standards.

In the Council's final recommendations, please include a call to reinvest in state and local planning capacity, including in specialized programs like OCMP. Strengthening planning capacity offers a pragmatic, durable path for permitting while safeguarding the values that make Oregon competitive and resilient.

[15] State of Oregon, Oregon Coastal Management Program, accessed 4/16/2026, https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/ocmp/pages/index.aspx

[16] Oregon's Statewide Land Use Planning Goals 16 (estuaries), 17 (coastal shorelands), and 18 (beaches and dunes), Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development, https://www.oregon.gov/lcd/OP/Pages/Goals.aspx

[17] The Pew Charitable Trusts, Oregon Coastal Communities Seek Solutions Amid Worsening Storms, Sea-Level Rise, 1/27/26, https://www.pew.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2026/01/27/oregon-coastal-communities-seek-solutions-amid-worsening-storms-sea-level-rise

3: Align the Council's recommendations with the Governor's recent climate-focused executive orders, including Executive Order 25-26 directing state agencies "to take urgent action to promote the resilience of our communities and natural and working lands and waters." This alignment may reveal multi-benefit policy pathways that balance conservation, development, and resilience needs as Oregon plots a course for future prosperity.

Pew applauded Governor Kotek's recent issuance of Executive Order 25-26 (EO 25-26),[18] instructing state agencies to take urgent action to promote the resilience of our communities and natural and working lands and waters. Our organization had previously made recommendations[19] and provided technical assistance to the Governor's office along these lines, and we stand ready to help with implementation.

As noted by Governor Kotek in her issuance of EO 25-26:

> Oregon is at an inflection point as changing climate and ocean conditions are impacting Oregon's landscapes, waters, communities, and local economies with increased temperatures, warming surface waters, changing precipitation patterns, reduced snowpack, hotter and drier summers, sea-level rise, diminishing water supplies, habitat constraints to iconic species, and more frequent and damaging wildfires and extreme weather events.[20]

Oregon's working lands and waters, across agriculture, forestry, ranching, and fisheries sectors, collectively represent a major share of the state's economy. Food and fiber production, processing, retail, and service account for more than $42 billion in annual output.[21,22] The commercial and recreational fishing economies accounted for $1.2 billion and $321 million in output respectively, as of 2020-2021.[23] Further, Oregon's public lands and waters are the centerpiece of a thriving tourism economy – a more than $14 billion industry that employs more 120,000 Oregonians[24] – and outdoor recreation economy that accounted for more than $9 billion of economic activity and supported more than 75,000 jobs.[25] These natural areas provide clean air and water, and fish and wildlife habitat, all while helping communities prepare for and withstand

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[18] State of Oregon, Governor Tina Kotek, Executive Order No. 25-26, October 21, 2025, https://www.oregon.gov/gov/eo/eo-25-26.pdf

[19] The Pew Charitable Trusts, "How Oregon Can Leverage Its Nature for a Brighter Future," September, 15, 2025, https://www.pew.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2025/09/15/how-oregon-can-leverage-its-nature-for-a-brighter-future

[20] State of Oregon, Governor Tina Kotek, Executive Order No. 25-26, October 21, 2025, page 1, https://www.oregon.gov/gov/eo/eo-25-26.pdf

[21] Oregon State Board of Agriculture, 2025 Report, accessed 4/29/2026, https://www.oregon.gov/oda/Documents/Publications/Administration/BoardReport.pdf

[22] Oregon Forest Resources Institute, Oregon Forest Facts 2025-2026 Edition, accessed 4/29/2025, https://oregonforests.org/media/2351

[23] The Research Group, LLC. Oregon Commercial and Marine Recreational Fishing Industry Economic Activity for Years 2020 and 2021, Addendum 2023, Executive Summary. Prepared for Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Marine Reserve Program and Marine Resource Program. June 2024, https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/docs/TRG%20Oregon%20fishing%20industry%202020-2021%20ES.pdf

[24] Dean Runyan Associates, The Economic Impact of Travel in Oregon: Calendar Year 2024 Preliminary, 4/14/2025, https://industry.traveloregon.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/Oregon_2024_2025-05-01.pdf

[25] U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Outdoor Recreation Economic Statistics, March 5, 2026, https://apps.bea.gov/regional/outdoor-recreation/pdf/Oregon2024.pdf

environmental changes and hazards, including extreme weather events. By proactively managing and protecting these lands and waters for future conditions, state leaders can help ensure that people will continue to enjoy and prosper from Oregon's natural and working lands for decades to come.

Therefore, the state government and communities must prepare for a host of impacts, from longer and more intense droughts and wildfire seasons and less predictable quantities—and quality—of freshwater to more invasive species and diseases, changing wildlife migration patterns, and increased sea-level rise, among others.

EO 25-26 also articulated work underway through the Plan for a Resilient Oregon, a "people-centered resilience strategy to help communities around Oregon "adapt and thrive in the face of increasingly severe climate risks, and to support communities in long-term recovery from climate-driven disasters."[26] And a separate executive order, EO 25-29, focuses on reducing greenhouse gas emissions and advancing Oregon's clean energy future.[27]

We encourage the Council, in its final recommendations, to align with the Governor's recent climate-focused executive orders. These orders contain policy pathways that, if taken together, can help create the balance of conservation and development needed as Oregon plots a course for future prosperity.

4: Demonstrate engagement with the Oregon Department of Energy's Natural Climate Solutions program. The Council's final recommendations will benefit from this connection as it may surface opportunities to enhance the state's existing workforce on natural and working lands.

Since 2023, launched in large part to implement Oregon House Bill 3409, the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) has supported efforts to enhance or protect land-based net carbon sequestration on natural and working lands across the state. This work includes publishing, in December 2025, Oregon's first Land-Based Net Carbon Inventory[28] which provides the state, decisionmakers, and the public a better understanding of the effects of the state's land use changes over the past 35 years on its greenhouse gas emissions and removals.

And perhaps most relevant to the Council, in December 2025, ODOE also published a *Natural Climate Solutions Workforce Development and Training Programs Needs Study*.[29] In its publishing, ODOE provides the following summary of the report findings:

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[26] State of Oregon, Governor Tina Kotek, Executive Order No. 25-26, October 21, 2025, page 6, https://www.oregon.gov/gov/eo/eo-25-26.pdf

[27] State of Oregon, Governor Tina Kotek, Executive Order No. 25-29, November 18, 2025, https://www.oregon.gov/gov/eo/eo-25-29.pdf

[28] Oregon Department of Energy and Oregon Climate Action Commission, Report to the Oregon Legislature: Land-Based Net Carbon Inventory, December 31, 2025, https://www.oregon.gov/energy/energy-oregon/Documents/2025-Land-Based-Net-Carbon-Inventory-Report.pdf

[29] Oregon Department of Energy and Oregon Climate Action Commission, Report to the Oregon Legislature: Natural Climate Solutions Workforce Development and Training Programs Needs Study, December 31, 2025 https://www.oregon.gov/energy/energy-oregon/Documents/2025-NCS-Workforce-Needs-Report.pdf

> According to the study, there are nearly 130,000 natural climate solutions-related jobs already in Oregon, and natural climate solutions-related industries are growing, with opportunities for additional training and engagement with workers. There is also an opportunity to partner with, support, invest in, and prioritize a Tribal-led natural climate solutions workforce. Expansion of the natural climate solutions will have outsized benefits to rural economies and rural workforces in Oregon.[30]

Pew encourages the Council to reach out to ODOE staff to learn more about the findings and implications of its workforce development study , including Jamshed Suntoke - Climate Team Lead, 503-510-7206, Jamshed.Suntoke@energy.oregon.gov. The Council's final recommendations will benefit from this connection as it may surface opportunities to enhance the state's existing workforce on natural and working lands.

Thank you for your service on the Prosperity Council and for taking the time to review these comments. Taken together, the recommendations above can supplement your work and help Oregon capitalize on what the state is doing well with regard to conservation, development, resilience, and prosperity for all Oregonians. We look forward to the Council's final report in the near future.

Sincerely,

Brett Swift

Brett Swift
Project Director, U.S. Conservation
The Pew Charitable Trusts

Cc:
The Honorable Tina Kotek, Governor, State of Oregon
The Honorable Tim Knopp, Chief Prosperity Officer, State of Oregon
Brenda Ortigoza Bateman, Ph.D., Director, DLCD
Geoff Huntington, Senior Natural Resources Advisor, Governor's Office
Chandra Ferrari, Natural Resources Advisor, Governor's Office
Jonna Papaefthimiou, State Resilience Officer

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[30] Oregon Department of Energy, "New Reports Highlight Importance of Oregon Lands for Climate Mitigation and Workforce Needs to Support Natural Climate Solutions," blogpost dated January 5, 2026, https://energyinfo.oregon.gov/blog/2026/1/5/new-reports-highlight-lands-climate-mitigation-and-workforce-needs-to-support-natural-climate-solutions

May 18, 2026

Governor Tina Kotek
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Prosperity Council Co-Chairs Renée James and Curtis Robinhold
Members of the Oregon Prosperity Council

RE: The Prosperity Council's Final Recommendations Must Deliver for Oregon Workers

Dear Governor Kotek, Co-Chairs James and Robinhold, and members of the Oregon Prosperity Council:

The Prosperity Council's draft recommendations confirm that this Council has set out to deliver prosperity for corporations and the wealthy, not working families. The framing, the agenda, and the voices given the most weight have consistently pointed in one direction: tax cuts for businesses and the wealthy, deregulation without accountability, and the same corporate incentive packages that have been failing working people for decades. We have seen this before. It does not work.

Before we get into the specifics, we want to name something. When politicians, academic journals, and business leaders talk about "the economy" they usually mean GDP numbers and business rankings. We think the real question is simpler: Can a person working in Oregon pay their rent? Do they have health insurance? Can they retire with some dignity?

For more than forty years, Oregon and the nation have run the same economic experiment under different names. Cut taxes at the top, reduce regulations, and wait for prosperity to trickle down. We're still waiting. Since 1979, wages for the top 1% have grown nearly three times faster than wages for workers at the bottom[1]. The workers who produced that growth saw a fraction of it. The public investments that were supposed to be replaced by private sector growth — schools, childcare, healthcare, infrastructure — were cut and hollowed out instead.

The results of that economic structure are not ambiguous, and they are visible in every Oregon community: underfunded schools, a behavioral health crisis that fills our streets, jails and emergency rooms, a childcare system so broken that parents are priced out of the workforce, and infrastructure that costs more to fix every year we delay.

Here is what makes this especially important for this Council to grapple with: Oregon has been an extraordinarily generous business partner. We've given Intel billions in property tax exemptions and direct funding as well as special legislative authority, while Nike received a custom tax deal worth over $2 billion across 30 years, all with minimal requirements for

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1 https://www.epi.org/blog/wages-for-the-top-1-skyrocketed-160-since-1979-while-the-share-of-wages-for-the-bottom-90-shrunk-time-to-remake-wage-pattern-with-economic-policies-that-generate-robust-wage-growth-for-vast-majority/

environmental stewardship, community benefits, or workplace protections. Oregon kept its end of both bargains, and both companies laid off thousands of workers anyway. When public dollars flow to private companies without enforceable conditions, it isn't economic development — it's a transfer of wealth from Oregon's schools and communities to corporate shareholders.

The Trump administration has run this experiment twice — in his first term, the largest corporate tax cut in American history, followed now by even more tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy, shredded federal budgets, gutted worker, and environmental protections, tariffs that are driving up costs for Oregon businesses and families, and the dismantling of the education and research investments that Oregon's innovation economy depends on. Wealth has concentrated further. Oregon is already absorbing the fallout. We cannot add our own version on top of it.

And yet, that is precisely what the emerging recommendations from the Prosperity Council propose to do. The current outline proposes cutting Oregon's top marginal income tax rates in the same year Oregon's wealthiest residents recorded the highest incomes in state history[2]. It proposes vaguely "streamlining" the corporate activities tax that funds our children's schools. It proposes cutting regulations by an arbitrary 20% without naming a single one. It explores a sales tax that Oregon voters have rejected nine times.

These are not new ideas. Every one of them has been on the corporate wish list for years. Repackaging them as a prosperity agenda does not make them one — especially at a moment when the federal government is already gutting Medicaid, education, research funding, and environmental protections that Oregon families and employers depend on. Our community is losing people to immigration enforcement. Our exporters are absorbing the chaos of an erratic trade policy. Our universities and research institutions are watching federal funding disappear. We are about to see our hospitals and providers lose Medicaid funding. Oregonians, especially those most vulnerable, will be sicker because of federal rollbacks of clean air and water protections.

The last thing Oregon needs is to layer our own version of trickle-down economics on top of that damage.

Meanwhile, the jobs Oregon is actually growing — in healthcare, home care, childcare, and behavioral health[3], are performed overwhelmingly by women and people of color — are barely mentioned in this Council's work. These are the workers holding Oregon's communities together right now. When they are paid poverty wages, they leave. Programs collapse. Parents exit the workforce because they cannot find or afford childcare. People in behavioral health crises end up in emergency rooms and on our streets. These are not just social problems — they are economic failures with real price tags that fall on all of us. Treating these workers as an afterthought is not an economic strategy. It is a choice about whose prosperity counts.

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[2] https://www.oregon.gov/das/oea/Documents/appendixb.pdf
[3] https://www.oregonlive.com/business/2026/04/one-industry-is-propping-up-oregons-job-market.html

Oregon can do better. We know that the leaked draft is still being discussed, however we also encourage you to fundamentally reshape these proposals to be about Oregonians' prosperity. We believe Oregon can build a genuinely strong economy that creates good jobs with real wages, real benefits, and a real voice at work. One that competes for advanced manufacturing, clean energy, and innovation employers by investing in the workforce pipelines, schools, and quality of life that those employers actually care about. One that stabilizes our tax base without shifting the burden onto working families. One that treats the education continuum from preschool through apprenticeship and higher education as the economic foundation.

We cannot build that economy by repeating the mistakes of the last forty years – cutting taxes at the top, deregulating, tax subsidies without accountability, and waiting for prosperity to trickle down. These policies have been tried. Oregon workers have been living with the consequences of trickle-down economics for forty years and our federal administration is doubling down

Governor Kotek, you charged this Council with delivering prosperity for all Oregonians — not just the wealthy few. There is still time to insist that the Council actually deliver on that promise before it presents final recommendations to you.

Oregon's workers and communities are not the obstacle to prosperity. We have always been its source. It is time for Oregon's economic strategy to be built on that truth.

Sincerely,

Organizations:
1000 Friends of Oregon
350PDX
AAUP Oregon
American Federation of Teachers - Oregon
Basic Rights Oregon
Building Power for Communities of Color
Building Resilience
Climate Solutions
Consejo Hispano
For All Families Oregon
Friends of Family Farmers
Human Services Coalition of Oregon
Klamath-Siskiyou Wildlands Center
Next Up Action Fund
Oregon AFSCME
Oregon Center for Public Policy
Oregon Education Association
Oregon Environmental Council
Oregon Federation of Nurses & Health Professionals (OFNHP)
Oregon Labor Federation, AFL-CIO

Oregon Just Transition Alliance
Oregon League of Conservation Voters
Oregon Nurses Association
Oregon Working Families Party
Our Oregon
Pineros Y Campesinos Unidos del Noroeste (PCUN)
Rogue Climate
SEIU Oregon
Silverton Progressives
Verde
Women's Foundation of Oregon

Individuals:
Khanh Pham, State Senator, Senate District 23
Jeff Golden, State Senator, Senate District 3
Lesly Muñoz, State Representative, House District 22
Farrah Chaichi, State Representative, House District 35
Anthony Estrada
Chuck Sheketoff, Tax Policy Advocate
Deborah Kay Warren
Elise LaVanaway
Jason Freilinger, Mayor of Silverton, OR
Jennifer Wilder, Oregon Farm Owner
Joe Craig
John Mullin, Human Services Advocate
Laurie Chadwick
Lori McEachern
Matt Newell-Ching, Member, Governor's Racial Justice Council
Robbie Earon
Steve Wright
Tristen Edwards, Member, Racial Justice Council

Strengthening Oregon's Competitiveness in the U.S. Semiconductor Industry

Oregon is a long-standing hub of the U.S. semiconductor industry, supporting advanced research, process development, and manufacturing that underpin national technology leadership, economic resilience, and supply-chain security. Historically, Oregon's role centered on high-value R&D and early-stage process development, supported by strong institutions, skilled talent, and a stable investment environment.

The industry is now shifting toward integrated, U.S.-based manufacturing and foundry models that more tightly link R&D, pilot lines, and high-volume production. Under this model, activities once insulated from cost comparison are now evaluated directly across states. Cost structure, regulatory certainty, workforce availability, and incentives increasingly determine where companies place production steps, expansions, and capital investment.

While Oregon retains clear strengths, its competitive position is eroding relative to leading semiconductor states such as Arizona, New Mexico, and Ohio. Oregon now faces higher overall tax burden, greater regulatory complexity with uncertain timelines, and growing affordability challenges for the manufacturing workforce. Without targeted policy modernization, these conditions increase the risk that future semiconductor investment, expansion, and job growth will shift out of Oregon.

Priority 1: Restore Cost Competitiveness Through Corporate Activity Tax Reform

Semiconductor manufacturing is highly input-intensive and capital-heavy, with long, multistage supply chains. Oregon's Corporate Activity Tax (CAT)—a gross receipts tax layered on top of the corporate income tax—creates tax pyramiding that compounds cost at every stage of production. This structure disproportionately impacts advanced manufacturing and is uncommon among competitor states.

As operations become more integrated across U.S. sites, CAT exposure increasingly influences where production steps are located. Suppliers often pass CAT costs through to Oregon-based customers, further increasing operating costs. Absent reform, companies are incentivized to move certain manufacturing activities out of Oregon to avoid recurring CAT liability.

Recommendation: Modernize the Corporate Activity Tax by significantly lowering the rate and/or creating exemptions or deductions for advanced manufacturing inputs to reduce tax pyramiding and restore competitive parity.

Priority 2: Cost Protection for Emissions-Intensive, Trade-Exposed Manufacturing under Greenhouse Gas Reduction regulations

Semiconductor fabrication relies on specialized process gases and chemistries that are essential to manufacturing and often have no viable near-term substitutes. The industry has already invested decades in emissions abatement, chemical substitution where feasible, and energy efficiency. Most advanced facilities now operate at or near the limits of best-available technology, with few remaining reduction pathways.

Oregon's Climate Protection Program (CPP) risks imposing compliance costs without corresponding technical solutions for further reductions. The CPP will act as another costly tax on production when no viable options exist to reduce emissions. Because competing semiconductor states do not impose similar requirements, this creates a cost asymmetry that directly affects where manufacturing work is located within the U.S.

Recommendation: Whether Oregon continues under the current Climate Protection Program or adopts a market-based system, emissions-intensive, trade-exposed semiconductor manufacturing must be protected through credit for early reductions, cost-protected or no-cost compliance mechanisms for facilities using best-available technology, and exemptions for unavoidable process emissions where no feasible alternatives exist.

Priority 3: Streamline and Clarify Air Toxics Permitting (Cleaner Air Oregon)

Semiconductor R&D and manufacturing require frequent process changes and new chemistries. Oregon's Cleaner Air Oregon program is among the most complex and costly air toxics systems in the nation, covering hundreds of compounds and relying on cumulative risk modeling without defined timelines. Moreover, DEQ continues to change implementing rules creating significant uncertainty for manufacturers that are in the program or will need an air permit in the future. Comparable states regulate air toxics with fewer chemicals, clearer thresholds, and much shorter and predictable permitting timelines.

Undefined timelines create uncertainty for expansions and can delay or constrain R&D activities. Chemical-specific limits also restrict innovation by triggering additional modeling and permitting for routine process changes. And constant changes to the regulations create significant regulatory uncertainty.

Recommendation: Simplify Cleaner Air Oregon by establishing enforceable permitting timelines and adopting a simplified process and framework that protect public health while providing operational certainty and flexibility.

Priority 4: Affordability and Workforce Retention

Oregon has made progress in semiconductor workforce development, but cost-of-living pressures undermine recruitment and retention of technicians and early-career professionals essential to fab operations. Housing costs, individual tax burdens, and high energy and fuel prices increasingly place Oregon at a disadvantage relative to competitor states.

Recommendation: Address affordability drivers—taxes, housing, energy, and fuel costs—to stem talent leakage and sustain workforce competitiveness.

Priority 5: Incentives – Preserve and Modernize Oregon's Competitive Toolkit

Semiconductor investments are among the most capital-intensive in the global economy and highly sensitive to upfront and ongoing costs. Oregon has benefited from significant investment enabled by the Strategic Investment Program (SIP), which remains critical and must be preserved. However, competitor states now offer broader incentive portfolios, including monetizable incentives that directly reduce project costs and execution risk.

Recommendation: Protect the Strategic Investment Program and expand Oregon's incentive toolkit to include monetizable R&D, capital investment, payroll, and infrastructure incentives comparable to leading semiconductor states.

Priority 6: Higher Education and Workforce Investment

Oregon has improved alignment between education and workforce systems and semiconductor industry needs, but further growth requires greater scale and coordination. Fragmented credentialing, limited training capacity, and inconsistent pathways constrain workforce responsiveness relative to peer states.

Recommendation: Expand technician training capacity; increase cleanroom infrastructure and high-school-to-degree pathways; improve statewide coordination and credential portability; and strengthen outcome-based accountability aligned to semiconductor workforce demand.

Conclusion

Semiconductor investment decisions are long-term, capital-intensive, and highly competitive. Targeted modernization of tax policy, regulatory frameworks, incentives, and workforce systems is essential for Oregon to retain and grow its role as a national semiconductor leader—supporting innovation, supply-chain resilience, and sustained high-wage employment.

Oregon Farm Bureau Responds to Governor Kotek's Prosperity Council and Recommendations

May 18, 2026

The Oregon Prosperity Roadmap articulates an ambitious and necessary vision for growing Oregon's GDP, strengthening workforce participation, and reducing barriers to investment. Its emphasis on data-driven decision-making, streamlined permitting, and statewide economic coordination provides a constructive starting point for improving Oregon's business climate.

However, a roadmap to prosperity that doesn't include dirt and gravel roads will be incomplete. By focusing largely on industry attraction and mobility, the Roadmap understates the importance of production agriculture, the industry that is already here, already invested, and already supporting Oregon's economy in every corner and county of the state.

Agriculture is not a future opportunity waiting to be developed; it is an existing economic engine that supports jobs, exports, manufacturing, trade, and rural communities across the state.

Agriculture and food processing remain foundational pillars of Oregon's economy. When accounting for their downstream economic impacts, agriculture and natural resource industries rank among the state's largest economic drivers. Yet despite their economic significance, these industries are too often overlooked in policy discussions or treated as obstacles to development rather than as essential assets to the state's long-term prosperity.

Oregon's geography, climate, and irrigation systems support one of the most diverse agricultural economies in the United States. Oregon's Department of Agriculture identifies eight distinct agricultural regions in our state.

Regional Highlights[1]

- **Willamette Valley –** Often described as "the most diverse agricultural region on earth," this area produces more than 170 crops. This diversity reflects the innovation and stewardship of Oregon farmers who help supply both local communities and global markets. The valley is the center of much of Oregon's specialty crop production.

[1] ODA – Oregon Agriculture Regions

- Key commodities:
  - Grass seed and specialty seed crops
  - Vegetables and berries
  - Hazelnuts, wine grapes, hops, and tree fruits
  - Nursery stock and Christmas trees
  - Dairy, beef cattle, and poultry
- **Mid-Columbia Region –** Hood River and the surrounding areas are known for world-class pears, cherries, apples, and a growing cider industry. Fruit orchards dominate the agricultural landscape. Generations of orchardists have built a reputation for high-quality fruit production that remains central to the local economy and culture.
  - Key commodities:
    - Pears (a national leader)
    - Sweet cherries
    - Apples and growing cider production
- **Columbia Plateau –** Eastern Oregon's wheat country demonstrates the importance of irrigation infrastructure and working lands. In addition to wheat, the region supports potatoes, onions, vegetables, hay, and dairy operations that contribute significantly to the state's food system. Irrigation along the Columbia River has enabled production.
  - Key commodities:
    - Potatoes
    - Onions
    - Processing vegetables
    - Watermelon
    - Tree fruit
    - Alfalfa
- **Northeast Oregon / Treasure Valley –** The Treasure Valley near Idaho is especially important for onion production and grows sugar beets and vegetables. This area is recognized for cattle, hay, onions, mint, potatoes, and sugar beets. Agriculture remains a cornerstone of rural communities and local employment throughout this region.
  - Key commodities:
    - Beef cattle
    - Hay
    - Potatoes
    - Mint
- **Coastal Oregon –** Oregon's coast benefits from the strength of both agriculture and commercial fisheries, producing world-renowned seafood such as salmon, crab, oysters, and clams alongside dairy products and specialty cheeses. The region reflects the full breadth and diversity of Oregon's food production economy, with the Pacific seafood industry serving as a defining feature of the state's coastal identity, culture, and economic vitality.
  - Key commodities:
    - Salmon, halibut, crab, oysters, mussels, and clams
    - Dairy products
    - Specialty cheeses,
    - Cranberries
- **Central Oregon –** Known for seed crops, garlic, hay, and cattle production, Central Oregon continues to expand its local food and vegetable production as communities grow.
  - Key commodities:

        - Specialty seed crops
        - Garlic
        - Hay
        - Beef cattle
- **Southeast Oregon –** Large ranching operations and irrigated pastureland dominate this region, where ranch families carefully manage vast landscapes that support Oregon's beef industry and rural economy. Ranching is the primary agricultural activity.
    - Key commodities:
        - Cattle operations
        - Irrigated hay and pasture production due to low rainfall

The diversity represented across these regions is a testament to the resilience of Oregon agriculture. Whether it's specialty crops in the Willamette Valley, wheat fields in eastern Oregon, orchards in Hood River, or ranchlands in the southeast, each region contributes to a strong and interconnected agricultural system that benefits all Oregonians.

Oregon agriculture is not only economically important, but also deeply connected to the state's identity, food security, open spaces, and quality of life. Oregon consumers benefit every day from year-round access to fresh, locally grown food, fiber, and natural products produced by hardworking farm and ranch families who care for the land and sustain rural communities across the state.

As the Council considers strategies for economic growth, Oregon Farm Bureau strongly urges the state to reduce the policy and regulatory burdens that increasingly constrain agriculture and rural industries.

Agriculture Is Not a Placeholder

The Roadmap repeatedly emphasizes business retention, economic growth, and investment attraction. Oregon agriculture already advances these goals every day. Unlike many industries, farms and ranches cannot simply relocate in response to rising costs or regulatory uncertainty. They are deeply rooted in Oregon's land, economy, and communities, often representing generations of stewardship, investment, and commitment tied to the same ground. Agriculture is unique in that way, it carries a deep-seated generational connection to the land, and state policy should recognize, reflect, and support that reality.

Agriculture is not land "awaiting development"; it is productive economic infrastructure that sustains rural communities, drives local economies, and strengthens Oregon's long-term economic resilience.

- Oregon agriculture, food processing, and related industries, including transportation, manufacturing, and value-added production, generate more than $42 billion in annual economic activity, support more than 692,000 jobs statewide, and account for roughly 13% of Oregon's gross state product, making agriculture one of Oregon's most important economic drivers and manufacturing sectors.[2]

[2] https://agsci.oregonstate.edu/sites/agscid7/files/main/about/oragecon_report_2021.pdf

- Oregon agriculture drives more than $2.5 billion in annual exports and represents approximately 15% of statewide sales activity, connecting Oregon producers to highly competitive national and global markets.[3]
- Oregon is the second most agriculturally diverse state in the nation, producing more than 220 commodities with an annual farm-gate value exceeding $6 billion.
- Oregon's farmers and ranchers manage more than 15 million acres of working land, with approximately 96% family-owned and operated. This is not a talking point, it's an on-the-ground reality of Oregon agriculture and the communities it sustains.
    - The majority of Oregon's 30,000+ farms are small-acreage operations between 10 and 50 acres.
    - More than 1,235 farms and ranches have remained in the same family for at least 100 years, including 47 operations with more than 150 years of continuous family ownership.
- Agriculture provides critical year-round and seasonal employment opportunities, particularly in rural communities.
    - Oregon ranks 15th nationally in reliance on farm jobs.
    - Oregon ranks 4th nationally for women principal farm operators, with women representing 44% of Oregon farmers and ranchers.
- Oregon farmers and ranchers help feed the world while producing high-quality, world-class products; on average, a single U.S. farmer feeds 168 people.[4] Farmers and ranchers continue to produce more with fewer resources – doing more with less to meet growing demands.
- Oregon agriculture faces growing economic pressures, including rising labor costs, inflation, regulatory burdens, and global competition.
    - Nearly 69% of Oregon farmers report operating at a net cash loss.[5]
    - Approximately 77% of farm household income comes from off-farm sources.
    - Oregon continues to lose farms and ranches as operating costs increasingly outpace profitability.[6]

Economic strategies that treat farmland as expendable for other growth priorities risk eroding existing GDP rather than expanding it. While growth and economic development are important, the state must avoid weakening the protections that preserve Oregon's agricultural land base and long-term food production capacity.

Oregon's land use system should continue protecting high-value farmland while also supporting the infrastructure, processing capacity, and economic opportunities necessary for long-term agricultural viability.

Regulatory Reform and Non-Mobile Industries

The Roadmap's commitment to reducing barriers to investment and growth, particularly through permitting inventories, FastTrack programs, and interagency coordination, is especially relevant to agriculture.

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3 https://www.oregonfb.org/oregon-agriculture
4 https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Oregon/Publications/facts_and_figures/facts_and_figures.pdf
5 https://www.ers.usda.gov/
6 https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2022/index.php

Because agriculture is land-based and operates on long investment timelines, regulatory costs accumulate differently than in mobile industries. Delays, uncertainty, and overlapping compliance requirements directly affect production capacity, investment decisions, and farm viability.

Oregon businesses benefit most from a regulatory system that is transparent, science-based, timely, and predictable. Regulatory certainty allows farms, ranches, and processors to invest confidently, expand operations, and support rural employment.

Examples of regulatory and administrative requirements that warrant careful cost-benefit evaluation include:

- Implementation impacts of Oregon’s Recycling and Modernization Act
- Oregon’s Climate Protection Program, Clean Fuels Program, and related impacts on agricultural fuel, energy, and transportation costs
    - Oregon already ranks among the states with the lowest per-capita carbon emissions. Additional fuel and energy regulations disproportionately affect agriculture, transportation, food processing, and rural consumers while increasing operating costs statewide. These policies risk harming the industries that form the economic backbone of rural Oregon.
- Workforce regulations that increase compliance complexity without directly improving on-farm workplace safety
- Agricultural overtime requirements applied to a seasonal industry with limited ability to absorb or pass through increased labor costs
    - The Council should engage directly with the agricultural community and workforce stakeholders to evaluate how overtime policies are affecting both farms and employees in practice. Policymakers should consider not only the intended benefits of overtime laws, but also the real-world impacts, including reduced hours, lost earning opportunities, and increased operational strain. Labor policies must remain practical and flexible for seasonal, weather-dependent industries such as agriculture.
- Restrictions affecting irrigation flexibility, long-term water supply reliability, and development of additional water storage
    - Long-term agricultural sustainability depends on reliable water access. The state should prioritize practical water storage, groundwater recharge, and irrigation infrastructure projects that support both environmental stewardship and agricultural productivity.
- Maintenance, permitting, and zoning policies affecting essential agricultural infrastructure

When regulatory processes are duplicative, unpredictable, or misaligned with operational realities, the result is not improved outcomes, but reduced production, fewer family operations, and diminished rural economic resilience. This directly conflicts with the Roadmap’s stated goals of GDP growth, job creation, and statewide prosperity.

Tax Policy and Competitiveness

In addition to regulatory reform, Oregon's long-term competitiveness depends on a tax and investment climate that supports reinvestment, modernization, and generational continuity in production agriculture.

Oregon's tax structure should encourage reinvestment in productive businesses and support long-term business continuity, particularly for multi-generational family farms and ranches. Additional recommendations for consideration include:

- Maintaining competitive tax policies relative to neighboring states
- Avoiding new taxes or fees that disproportionately impact production agriculture
- Supporting targeted tax incentives for capital investment, on-farm infrastructure, processing capacity, and rural business development
- Revising Oregon's estate tax and succession policies to help family farms and ranches transition successfully between generations
- Repealing or reforming policies that reduce agricultural competitiveness, including the Corporate Activity Tax and federal tax disconnect provisions
    - The CAT adds substantial costs throughout the agricultural supply chain and reduces the competitiveness of Oregon producers in national and international markets.
    - Agricultural producers need practical and affordable options regarding equipment depreciation, maintenance, and investment. Current policies increase uncertainty and may discourage needed capital purchases at a time when farms are already facing rising operational costs.

Support Medium and Large-Scale Agricultural Processing Capacity

Oregon would benefit significantly from expanded in-state processing infrastructure for fruit, vegetables, livestock, and other agricultural products. Increasing processing capacity would strengthen local economies, improve supply chain resilience, and create additional family-wage jobs in rural communities.

Agriculture Directly Advances the Roadmap's Strategic Goals

Production agriculture materially advances each of the Roadmap's core objectives:

- GDP Growth: Agriculture and food processing generate consistent economic output and export-driven revenue.
- Living-Wage Jobs: Farm, processing, transportation, and input-supply jobs support families across all regions.
- Business Retention: Agriculture represents one of Oregon's most deeply rooted and enduring industries.
- Global Trade: Oregon agriculture serves as a primary gateway to Pacific Rim markets.

Failing to explicitly integrate agriculture into sector strategies, FastTrack eligibility, and regulatory streamlining risks leaving one of Oregon's strongest economic sectors overlooked, constrained, and increasingly vulnerable.

Recommendations

To better align the Prosperity Roadmap with Oregon's actual economic structure, Oregon Farm Bureau recommends the following:

1. Explicitly identify production agriculture as a priority sector within economic growth, retention, and trade strategies.
2. Ensure production agriculture is represented in implementation bodies, including the Governor's Prosperity Council.
3. Apply permitting reform and FastTrack concepts to agricultural and food-processing projects, not solely large industrial or urban developments.
4. Prioritize investment in Oregon State University Extension, Experiment Stations, and applied agricultural research to support innovation, improve productivity, and position Oregon to lead in emerging agricultural opportunities.
5. Adopt risk-based, scale-appropriate regulatory approaches that recognize differences between family farms and large industrial facilities.
6. Frame farmland as productive economic infrastructure, not simply as a site for alternative development.

Summary

Oregon farmers and ranchers are a part of the solution. Oregon Farm Bureau has consistently advocated for policies that promote economic growth through lower costs, practical regulation, infrastructure investment, and a stable business climate.

Oregon agriculture is not asking for special treatment; we are asking for fair and accurate treatment. A prosperity strategy that overlooks the state's most enduring, place-based economic engine risks undermining the very foundation it seeks to strengthen. Fully integrating production agriculture into the Prosperity Council and its roadmap will lead to stronger economic outcomes, more resilient rural communities, environmental stewardship grounded in working lands, and a growth strategy rooted in Oregon's economic reality.

If Oregon is serious about long-term prosperity, agriculture and natural resource industries must be fully integrated into the state's economic strategy. Policies that improve regulatory certainty, invest in critical infrastructure, strengthen in-state processing capacity, and preserve business competitiveness are essential to ensuring farms, ranches, and rural communities remain viable for future generations.

Oregon cannot credibly claim to be advancing prosperity and business friendliness while continuing to impose disproportionate regulatory burdens on farms and ranches.

Farmers and ranchers face an ever-growing web of permitting requirements, labor mandates, environmental regulations, and compliance costs that erode competitiveness, discourage investment, and make it increasingly difficult for family operations to survive. Agriculture is not a peripheral industry; it is one of Oregon's foundational economic sectors. Policies that continually increase costs and uncertainty ultimately push production, processing, and jobs out of state. True prosperity requires a regulatory and economic framework that supports, rather than constrains, the people who produce Oregon's food, fiber, and fuel.

Oregon Farm Bureau appreciates the opportunity to provide input and looks forward to continued engagement with the Governor's Office, Business Oregon, the Prosperity Council, and others.

Respectfully,

Angela Bailey

Angela Bailey
President

OREGON TRAILS COALITION

May 15, 2026

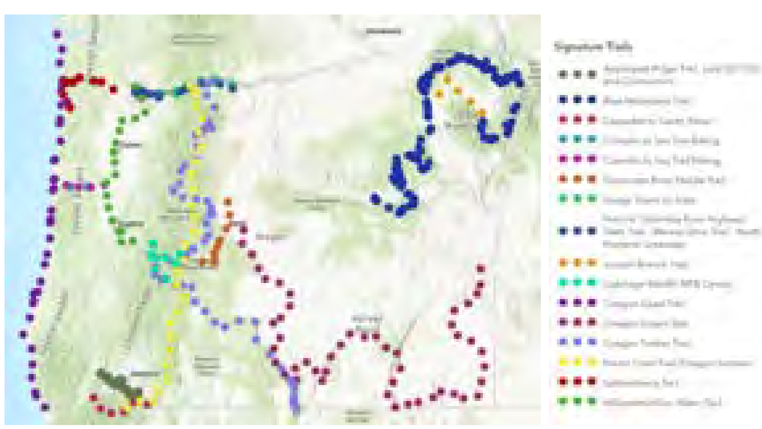
Dear Members of the Governor's Prosperity Council,

As you map a strategy for the advancement of Oregon's economic prosperity and growth, we ask you to consider the power of investing in Oregon's outdoor recreation economy: both in the trails and public infrastructure that support outdoor experiences for Oregon residents and tourists alike, and in supporting the outdoor business sector for which Oregon is a national leader.

BEA data showed that nationally, in 2024, outdoor recreation generated $1.3 trillion in economic impact (2.4% of U.S. GDP) and 5.2 million jobs, reflecting the desire of Americans across the country to get outdoors and recreate. Oregon's natural landscapes from mountains to ocean, from our high deserts to our Wild and Scenic Rivers, hold huge potential for a thriving and robust outdoor recreation economy, but we are currently leaving much of that potential on the table as other states make strategic investments that draw both businesses and visitors away from our state.

More than 80% of Oregonians report using local trails, and we know that connected trail systems help visitors stay longer, spend more, and reach small businesses. However, thus far, Oregon has failed to invest strategically in our Oregon Signature Trail system.

To illustrate the strategic power of investment in trails, let's look at a single example from our nation's other coast, the 150-mile Great Alleghany Passage Trail, a walking and biking trail connecting cities and small towns from Pittsburgh to Cumberland. The infrastructure that cost $80 million in initial investment to create now generates more than $121 million in annual economic impact, supporting 1,400 jobs and $74+ million in direct visitor spending and an additional $46 million from indirect/induced spending. That's the impact of just one fully-connected and maintained 150 mile trail. Imagine the power of investing in fully connecting Oregon's 15 Signature Trails pictured below.



Even with our anemic investment in trails and other recreation infrastructure, the 2022 *Economic Analysis Of Outdoor Recreation In Oregon* report showed that outdoor recreation in Oregon supported $15.7 billion in expenditures, $20.6 billion in total economic output, 192,000 full- and part-time jobs, and $12.4 billion in Oregon GDP in 2022. Every dollar spent on outdoor recreation in Oregon generated an additional $0.31 in secondary economic activity, with benefits flowing to restaurants, hotels, grocery stores, outfitters, retailers, and rural main streets.

SHORT-TERM INVESTMENTS FOR LONG-TERM PROSPERITY AND A THRIVING OREGON OUTDOOR ECONOMY

Reinstate Oregon's Office of Outdoor Recreation

Oregon's Office of Outdoor Recreation, originally enabled through legislation in 2017, and further codified in 2021's HB 2171, has remained empty and unstaffed since April 2023. This office is critical for cross-agency and cross-sector coordination and collaboration to streamline efforts to forward Oregon's outdoor recreation economy such as those laid out in the Governor's Task Force on Outdoor Recreation's *2020 Framework for Action*. We are especially in need of an all-lands hub for outdoor recreation planning and coordination in light of the disinvestment in and reorganization of federal land management agencies, affecting the management of more than 50% of the land mass of our state.

Meaningfully invest in a world-class trail network for Oregon

Trails are how we access Oregon's iconic landscapes. Oregon's trails funding programs are vastly oversubscribed from the Recreational Trails Program administered by OPRD to the Oregon Community Paths program administered by ODOT. Our public agencies are frequently forced to reduce project scopes, building our trails network by just a mile (or less) at a time rather than making the bold investments that can transform local economies.

As the legislature takes up transportation funding again in 2027, there is an opportunity to dedicate new funding in a transportation package for a transformative investment in developing and maintaining our statewide multi-use path network: creating the kind of communities where businesses want to locate, people want to live, people of all ages can safely get around, and visitors choose as destinations for multi-day trips.

Oregon leaders can also call for more direct investment in Oregon's Signature Trails such as the $1.3 M Congressionally Directed Spending allocation Senators Merkley and Wyden secured for Signature Trails in the Columbia Gorge, Umatilla NF, and Willamette NF in 2024.

Learn more about Oregon Signature Trails at
https://www.oregontrailscoalition.org/signature-trails

As you conclude your work, I hope the council will include strategies to support the state agencies managing our state lands and waterways, to invest in the trails and other recreation infrastructure that makes Oregon an accessible, appealing, world-class destination, and to support Oregon's outdoor recreation businesses from our small guides and outfitters to our outdoor product companies serving international markets.

Thank you for your work,

Stephanie Noll

Stephanie Noll, Director

The Oregon Trails Coalition is a cooperative body of broad-based, statewide trail interests dedicated to supporting, promoting, and advocating for the preservation, development, and stewardship of a statewide network of sustainable, world class trails. The Oregon Trails Coalition strives to ensure that Oregon's trails benefit all of our residents and visitors, and inspire respect for Oregon's natural and cultural resources. Our advisory council includes representatives from more than thirty federal, state, and local agencies, trail user groups, outdoor industry and tourism partners, and volunteer organizations. We represent walkers, bikers, runners, paddlers, equestrians, adaptive equipment users, skiers, snowmobilers, and motorized trail enthusiasts.

www.oregontrailscoalition.org | 503-290-4569 | steph.noll@oregontrailscoalition.org

Dear Members of the Governor’s Prosperity Council,

On behalf of Building Resilience, a statewide coalition of climate justice and public health, business and labor, faith and frontline communities, environmental, family, and youth organizations, and thousands of individual Oregonians, we share the attached brief, *Smarter Buildings for a Stronger Oregon Economy*, as a resource for the Council’s work.

It is our deeply held belief that prosperity is not a number on a balance sheet. It cannot be measured by GDP, the profits of our largest industries, or Oregon's ranking on a business climate index. Enterprise, sustainable innovation, and economic growth have their place in measuring prosperity. Prosperity in the long-term is investments that broaden opportunity for all Oregonians and strengthen our long-term trajectory, not trading away our health, safety, and joy in the pursuit of more profit for the few.

Oregon’s prosperity is measured by the experience of our residents. It is felt in whether a family can afford to live in a home in the community where they work, whether families can afford their utility bills, whether a parent has access to quality childcare so they can contribute fully to their community, and whether the infrastructure of daily life– homes, buildings, schools, roads, public health– is strong enough and clean enough to support a thriving society. A truly thriving state is not simply a cheap state or one that myopically proposes tax breaks for corporations and the most wealthy — it is an affordable one for all Oregonians, and a capable one, with an educated workforce, resilient communities, and a quality of life that attracts the most talented people and the most innovative firms.

This Council’s work offers an important opportunity to connect Oregon’s economic strategy with its homes and businesses. The following brief pulls from multiple sources of recent research and demonstrates the need to prioritize investments in:

- Business Climate: *Reducing Costs, Increasing Competitiveness, and Protecting Oregon Businesses from Energy Volatility*
- Workforce: *Building the Trades Pipeline for Oregon's Fastest-Growing Energy Sector*
- Equity, Resilience, and a Managed Transition: *Ensuring the Economic Benefits Are Broadly Shared*
- Tools for Growth: *Incentives, Land Use, and Economic Development Tools for the Electrification Era*

Policies that advance **healthy, affordable, resilient homes and buildings that run on renewable energy** are not separate, and should not be separate from economic policy**; they are economic policy.** The quality, efficiency, and resilience of our buildings directly affect the strength and success of our people and economy.

Sincerely,

The Building Resilience Steering Committee

Smarter Investing in Buildings for a Stronger Oregon Economy

Executive Summary

Core thesis: The policies the Building Resilience coalition advocates for — energy efficiency in buildings, strategic electrification, and community resilience infrastructure — are not environmental policies with economic side effects. They are economic policies with environmental co-benefits. They reduce household and business energy costs, create high-road in-state jobs, expand Oregon's tax base, improve workforce participation, and strengthen Oregon's competitive position at a moment when the national clean energy economy is undergoing a structural transformation.

Central ask to the Prosperity Council: Integrate building electrification, energy efficiency, and community resilience into the Council's recommendations on all three strategic priorities — Business Climate, Workforce, and Tools for Growth — as fundamental economic development strategies. We have included some ideas for funding these priorities below, through existing policies like the Climate Protection Program and passing a Climate Resilience Superfund.

Statistics of note:

- Oregonians spent **$19.5 billion on energy in 2022**, with roughly $8.5 billion spent on energy to power homes, businesses, and industries. *(ODOE Biennial Energy Report, 2024)*
- The average Oregonian could lose **~$12,000 per year** in income from the effects of greenhouse gas emissions under a business-as-usual scenario *(Oregon Energy Strategy, 2025)*
- Oregon's goal of installing 500,000 heat pumps by 2030 will deliver **median savings of $300 to $650 a year,** depending on heat pump efficiency, for 92 - 100% of the 49 million homes analyzed. *(ODOE 2025 Biennial Heat Pump Report)*
- Oregon employed **57,860 clean energy workers** in 2025, with clean energy accounting for 59.2% of the state's total energy workforce — ranking Oregon **8th nationally** *(E2 Clean Jobs America, 2025)*
- The Oregon Energy Strategy projects **9,200 to 16,500 net new energy sector jobs by 2035**, driven primarily by efficiency and electrification investments, with buildings' jobs projected to grow 9–12% *(ODOE, Oregon Energy Strategy Jobs Analysis, 2025)*
- Independent modeling estimates Oregon's clean energy transition will add **$2.5 billion annually to GDP by 2050**, with $49 billion in cumulative economic benefits *(Energy Innovation, 2022)*

Policies of note:

- **The Oregon Energy Strategy establishes the least-cost pathways for Oregon's economy and finds that it runs through efficiency and electrification.** The Governor's Executive Order 25-29 directs agencies to take action on Energy Strategy recommendations. A delay in implementing these least-cost approaches risks higher costs and economic burdens for businesses, families, and the government.
- The **Climate Protection Program ('CPP') is a business-minded solution**, developed over years of public process with considerable industry input. By providing a predictable, flexible path for reducing

emissions, the CPP will accelerate innovation, cut costs for consumers, and create thousands of jobs in the clean economy. Moreover, **Community Climate Investments as a component of the CPP can help fund projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions in Oregon's environmental justice communities.**

- Heatwaves, like the 2021 Heatdome, **killed more than 100 people and had economic impacts between $1.3 billion and $4.6 billion** due to mortality and health effects**.** The economic ripple effects of smoke-related health issues and lost productivity are estimated to **cost Oregon up to $1 billion in GDP during heavy smoke years.** *(Economic Costs of Climate Change in Oregon, 2024)*
- The state must pass a sustainable revenue and funding measure for heat pumps, community resilience hubs, and other **public safety and wildfire mitigation and adaptation solutions** to address urgent and growing climate damages**.** Policy solutions like **Climate Resilience Superfund legislation** can create a sustained revenue source from multinational oil and gas companies - *not* local Oregon businesses nor taxpayers - to pay for the pollution and damages these companies have caused.

SECTION 1: BUSINESS CLIMATE

Reducing Costs, Increasing Competitiveness, and Protecting Oregon Businesses from Energy Volatility

Prosperity Council Goal: Explore and recommend strategies for regulatory streamlining and potential changes in tax policy that would stimulate GDP growth and long-term tax revenue.

Core argument: Volatile fossil fuel costs are a structural drag on Oregon's business climate. Buildings that run on efficient electric systems insulate businesses and households from energy price shocks, reduce operating costs, and free up capital for other investments. Strategic regulatory frameworks — Building Performance Standards, updated energy codes, and incentives for heat pumps and other efficiency measures — can reduce costs and deliver certainty for businesses planning capital upgrades.

1.1 Renewable Energy and Efficiency as Smart Economic Policy

- Renewable electricity and electrification are not just cheaper on average — they are **more price-stable**, insulating businesses from the global commodity price swings that have destabilized energy costs since 2020. *(Oregon Energy Strategy, 2025)*
- The Oregon Energy Strategy found that **the least-cost pathway for Oregon's entire economy** depends on high levels of energy efficiency and electrification. Delaying building and transportation electrification **increases statewide costs and strands capital.** *(ODOE Oregon Energy Strategy, 2025)*
- Buildings account for **nearly 20% of energy use in Oregon's commercial sector**. Oregon's new Building Performance Standard (BPS), launched in 2025, creates a structured compliance pathway for large commercial buildings — a regulatory certainty tool for business owners planning capital investments. *(ODOE, 2025)*

1.2 The Cost of Energy Burden and Why Efficiency Is Fiscal Policy

- High energy burden reduces household disposable income and suppresses local economic activity — it is both a social equity issue and a drag on consumer spending in local economies.
- Weatherization delivers significant returns: for every dollar invested in home weatherization, **$0.90 to $1.40 is gained in direct energy benefits** — before counting health, productivity, and avoided-cost benefits *(Brookings Institution, 2024)*
- Oregon's BPS program and Building Energy Codes establish a performance floor that reduces long-run operating costs for building owners, increases asset values, and reduces tenant energy burden — all markers of a stronger commercial real estate sector.

1.3 Regulatory Streamlining: Permitting, Codes, and Incentive Certainty

- Streamlined permitting for heat pump installations and building energy upgrades reduces contractor costs and increases project throughput — a regulatory reform that stimulates private investment without public subsidy.
- Consistent, predictable energy codes give builders and manufacturers the market certainty to invest in training, equipment, and supply chains — the Prosperity Council's stated interest in "tools that reflect today's business ecosystem."
- Oregon ranked **#9 nationally for energy efficiency** in ACEEE's State Energy Efficiency Scorecard (2025), recognizing the BPS program and equity-focused efficiency policies — a competitive advantage for attracting businesses that prioritize ESG and operating cost certainty *(ODOE, 2025 Year in Review)*

SECTION 2: WORKFORCE

Building the Trades Pipeline for Oregon's Fastest-Growing Energy Sector

Prosperity Council Goal: Explore and recommend opportunities to modernize Oregon's workforce development systems to improve the effectiveness and relevance of training programs for our workforce and employers in growing sectors.

Core argument: The clean energy transition in buildings — heat pump installation, weatherization, EV charging, grid upgrades, microgrid development — is creating a large, durable, and geographically distributed surge in demand for skilled trades workers. Oregon's workforce development systems must align with this demand now, or cede those jobs to workers from other states. **A truly prosperous Oregon is one where Oregon families have dignified labor and high-road jobs and opportunities that allow their families to thrive.**

2.1 The Occupations Oregon Needs Right Now

- The Oregon Energy Strategy's jobs analysis identifies **electricians, construction laborers, and HVAC/refrigeration mechanics** as the occupations projected to see the **greatest number of new employees by 2035** *(ODOE Jobs Analysis, 2025)*

- Buildings sector jobs are projected to grow between **4,500 and 5,500 by 2035 (9–12% growth from 2024)**, with gains concentrated in commercial HVAC, residential HVAC, and related construction subsectors *(ODOE Jobs Analysis, 2025)*

2.2 Geographic Equity: Eastern Oregon and Rural Communities

- The Oregon Energy Strategy projects **roughly 6,500 new energy sector jobs in Eastern Oregon by 2035 — a 33% increase from the 2024 baseline** — driven by clean electricity generation, transmission, and electrification *(ODOE Jobs Analysis, 2025)*
- This represents a proportionally larger opportunity for rural communities than for the Portland metro area, making workforce alignment a geographic equity and rural development imperative.
- Rural communities along the electrical trades pipeline (electricians, lineworkers, HVAC technicians) stand to gain substantially — but only if training programs are accessible and proximate to where workers live.

2.3 The Workforce Gap: A Policy Risk for Oregon

- The ODOE Jobs Analysis explicitly warns: "If an adequate workforce is unavailable and the pipelines for training and developing the workforce are not sufficient, this could create a significant barrier to meeting our state's energy goals or to ensuring that Oregonians capture those in-state job opportunities." *(ODOE Jobs Analysis, 2025)*
- Oregon clean energy jobs grew **nearly 2% in 2024** and **11.2% since 2020**, but workforce development programs have not kept pace with demand. *(E2 Clean Jobs America, 2025)*
- ODOE awarded **$2 million in workforce grants in 2025** to six organizations, including Warm Springs Construction Enterprise, Klamath Community College, and Northwest Native Chamber — demonstrating that geographically targeted, community-based training works. *(ODOE, 2025)*

2.4 Recommendations for Workforce Development Modernization

- **Align community college curricula** with projected occupational demand in HVAC, electrical work, weatherization, and grid infrastructure — using Oregon Energy Strategy job projections as a planning baseline.
- **Expand registered apprenticeship pathways** in the clean building trades, with wage standards that reflect the "living wage" tier ($33–$48/hour) that energy sector jobs already cluster in. *(ODOE Jobs Analysis, 2025)*
- **Fund location-based training programs** in rural Oregon and Tribal communities where energy sector job growth as a share of baseline will be highest — preventing in-state opportunities from flowing to out-of-state contractors.
- **Co-locate training with deployment**: Programs attached to weatherization, heat pump, and EV charging deployment create immediate employment as training progresses
- **Establish a Clean Buildings Trades Pipeline**: coordinate across ODOE, Oregon Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, and industry partners to create a unified workforce signal aligned with building code upgrade cycles and utility electrification programs.

SECTION 3: EQUITY, RESILIENCE, AND THE MANAGED TRANSITION

Ensuring the Economic Benefits Are Broadly Shared

Core argument: A managed transition that prioritizes low-income households, rural communities, and Tribal nations for energy efficiency upgrades and resilience investments is both an equity imperative and an economic efficiency strategy — it reduces the risk of stranded assets, prevents energy burden from deepening economic inequality, and ensures Oregon's workforce pipeline draws from its full talent pool.

3.1 Energy Burden is an Economic Drag

- High-energy-burden households — those spending more than 6% of income on home energy — are disproportionately concentrated in communities already facing economic hardship.
- An unmanaged transition that leaves low-income and rural households on an aging, increasingly expensive fossil fuel system as other customers electrify will **increase energy burden** for the most vulnerable and **reduce their economic participation.**
- Prioritizing energy efficiency upgrades and electrification assistance for high-burden households converts a fiscal liability into a recurring household income gain.

3.2 Tribal Nations: Energy Sovereignty as Economic Development

- Oregon's nine federally recognized Tribes have identified energy sovereignty — the ability to control and determine their own energy infrastructure — as essential to self-determination and long-term resilience. *(Oregon Energy Strategy, 2025)*
- Community-scale solar, battery storage, and microgrid investments on Tribal lands create local economic activity, reduce outflow of energy dollars from reservation communities, and strengthen resilience during grid outages and climate events.
- Oregon's $1M grant to Warm Springs for solar and battery storage at three community sites (permanent supportive housing, affordable housing, and a community center) is a model of integrated economic and resilience investment. *(ODOE/Microgrid Knowledge, 2026)*

3.3 The Just Transition Workforce Dimension

- Building Resilience coalition advocacy explicitly seeks "high-road jobs" — jobs with living wages, benefits, and advancement pathways — in the clean energy economy.
- ODOE's Jobs Analysis found that energy sector employment growth spans all wage tiers, with the distribution remaining essentially stable — but intentional program design can tilt toward living-wage outcomes.
- Workforce programs prioritizing BIPOC communities, rural workers, and returning workers can help Oregon ensure the economic gains of the clean energy transition do not simply replicate existing patterns of inequality.

SECTION 4: TOOLS FOR GROWTH

Incentives, Land Use, and Economic Development Tools for the Electrification Era

Prosperity Council Goal: Ranging from incentives to land use, explore and recommend updates to economic development tools that reflect and support today's business ecosystem.

Core argument: Oregon's economic development toolkit was largely built for a fossil-fuel economy. Heat pump rebates, building performance standards, community resilience hubs, microgrids, and clean energy manufacturing incentives are not climate programs bolted onto economic development — they are the updated economic development tools of the 21st century. Orienting Oregon's incentive structures, land use frameworks, and infrastructure investment programs around building electrification and community resilience will produce durable, geographically broad economic benefits.

4.1 Energy Efficiency and Electrification Incentives as Economic Development Tools

- Household-level savings from building and transportation energy efficiency and electrification function as **recurring wage increases** for working Oregonians, particularly those in lower income brackets who spend the highest share of income on energy.
- Incentives and services from providers like Energy Trust of Oregon create **economic development opportunities for employing energy efficiency and electrification contractors and installers** - especially in rural and other communities with higher-than-average unemployment rates.

4.2 Community Resilience as Economic Infrastructure

- The Building Resilience Coalition's work centers on the recognition that homes and buildings are Oregon's first line of defense against climate disruption — and that an unmanaged transition leaves the most vulnerable communities exposed.
- Community Resilience Hubs (physical spaces with backup power, cooling/heating capacity, and community services) function as **economic anchors during climate disruptions** — reducing the economic toll of wildfires, heat waves, ice storms, and grid outages on local business activity and workforce participation.
- Oregon's community clean energy grant program, established under HB 2021, explicitly defines Community-Based Renewable Energy projects as those that "result in increased resiliency or community stability, local jobs, economic development, or direct energy cost savings to families and small businesses." *(Pacific Power/HB 2021, 2021)*
- Oregon has invested **$12 million in microgrids, solar, and storage** to power wells, schools, and Tribal facilities — including a $1M grant to Warm Springs for solar and battery storage at three community sites. *(Microgrid Knowledge, 2026)*
- HB 2065 and HB 2066 (2025) created new frameworks for microgrid development across Oregon, passing with **bipartisan support** — a signal that energy resilience is understood as a broadly shared economic interest, not a partisan one. *(Sustainable Northwest, 2025)*
- Grid transmission investment delivers broad economic returns: **each $1 billion of transmission investment supports about 13,000 FTE-years of employment and $2.4 billion in economic activity.** *(Brattle Group, cited in Move Oregon Forward report, 2025)*

4.3 Land Use: Compact, Connected Development Reduces Energy Costs and Infrastructure Burdens

- Energy-efficient buildings in well-connected, walkable neighborhoods reduce both energy consumption and transportation costs — the two largest household expenses after food.
- Oregon's existing Housing + Transportation cost burden data (ODOT, 2022) shows combined spending of **56% of household income** — a structural affordability crisis that land use and building policy can address in tandem.
- Buildings that meet high energy efficiency standards tend to have **higher assessed values**, contributing to the property tax base and supporting long-term tax revenue — a direct Prosperity Council interest.

4.4 Federal Transition Risk and Oregon's Opportunity

- The federal government's rollback of IRA clean energy incentives creates short-term market uncertainty, but the **structural transformation of global energy markets is already irreversible.** Moreover, the Trump Administration’s War in Iran has led to a surge in fuel prices in Oregon and states across the country.
- **State-level incentive continuity** — heat pump rebates, building upgrade incentives, clean vehicle credits, weatherization programs — fills the gap left by federal retrenchment and sends a durable market signal to manufacturers, investors, and workforce trainers like unions.

CONCLUSION

The Building Resilience Coalition's agenda — energy efficient buildings, strategic electrification, community resilience — maps directly onto every dimension of the Prosperity Council's economic mandate. We can reduce the cost of living and doing business in Oregon through upgrades to homes and buildings. The work creates a large, durable pathway for skilled trades jobs distributed across the state, including in rural communities. We must deploy modern economic development tools — building performance standards, resilience incentives, workforce pipelines — that fit the economy Oregon is building, not the one it is leaving behind.

The Oregon Energy Strategy establishes the least-cost pathway for Oregon's economy and finds that it runs through efficiency and electrification. A delay in implementing these least-cost approaches risks higher costs and economic burdens for businesses, families, and the government. The Prosperity Council has the opportunity to give that pathway economic teeth — to ensure that Oregon's businesses, workers, and communities benefit from the structural transformation already underway in global energy markets, rather than being left behind by it.

Building resilience is economic policy. It is time to treat it that way.

APPENDIX: KEY SOURCES AND LINKS

Source	Relevance	Link
Oregon Energy Strategy (ODOE, 2025)	Least-cost pathway, job projections, household cost analysis	https://www.oregon.gov/energy/Data-and-Reports/Documents/Oregon-Energy-Strategy.pdf
OES Jobs Analysis Key Findings (ODOE, 2025)	9,200–16,500 net new jobs by 2035; occupation-level projections	https://www.oregon.gov/energy/Data-and-Reports/Documents/OES-Jobs-Analysis-Key-Findings.pdf
E2 Clean Jobs America (2025)	57,860 Oregon clean energy workers; Oregon 8th nationally	https://cleanjobsamerica.e2.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/09/E2-2025-Clean-Jobs-America-2025_final.pdf
Energy Innovation Oregon Modeling (2022)	10,000 jobs + $2.5B/yr GDP by 2050 from existing policies	https://energyinnovation.org/2022/03/10/new-oregon-energy-policy-simulator-modelling-shows-major-benefits-of-accelerating-climate-policies/
Oregon Clean Tech Task Force (2024)	$4–8B investment, 9,000–18,000 manufacturing jobs potential	https://apps.oregon.gov/oregon-newsroom/OR/GOV/Posts/Post/governor-kotek-releases-clean-tech-manufacturing-task-force-recommendations
ODOE Biennial Energy Report (2024)	$19.5B Oregon energy spend	https://energyinfo.oregon.gov/ber-energy-numbers-2024
U.S. DOE Energy & Employment Report (2024)	National clean energy job growth 4.2%	https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2024-08/2024%20USEER%20FINAL.pdf
Brookings: Weatherization (2024)	$0.90–$1.40 energy benefit per dollar invested	https://www.brookings.edu/articles/the-u-s-needs-better-more-accessible-home-weatherization-programs/
Oregon HB 2065/2066 Microgrid Laws (2025)	Bipartisan microgrid/resilience framework	https://www.sustainablenorthwest.org/blog/microgrids-oregon-4-2025
ODOT Oregon Transit and Housing Study (2022)	56% combined housing + transportation cost burden	https://www.oregon.gov/odot/Planning/Documents/ODOT_Transit_%26_Housing_Study_Final_Report.pdf
Brattle Group: Transmission Investment (2011)	$1B transmission = 13,000 FTE-years, $2.4B economic activity	https://www.brattle.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/8209_employment_and_economic_benefits_of_transmission_infrastructure_investmt_pfeifenberger_hou_may_2011_wires.pdf
ODOE Biennial Heat Pump Report (2025)	Median savings of $300 to $650 a year, depending on heat pump efficiency, for 92 percent to 100 percent of the 49 million homes analyzed	https://www.oregon.gov/energy/data-and-reports/Documents/2025-Biennial-Oregon-Heat-Pump-Report.pdf

Source	Relevance	Link
The Economic Costs of Climate Change for Oregonians. A First Look. (2024)	Heatwaves, like the 2021 Heatdome, killed more than 100 people, and had economic impacts between $1.3 billion and $4.6 billion due to mortality and health effects. The economic ripple effects of smoke-related health issues and lost productivity are estimated to cost Oregon up to $1 billion in GDP during heavy smoke years.	https://www.sustainable-economy.org/economic-costs-of-climate-change-in-oregon-a-first-look

June 1, 2026

sent via email: Prosperity.Roadmap@oregon.gov, tim.knopp@oregon.gov

Governor's Prosperity Council
Tim Knopp, Chief Prosperity Officer
Office of Governor Tina Kotek, State of Oregon
900 Court Street, Suite 254
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Recommendations for development of statewide economic strategy by the Prosperity Council

Dear Co-Chair James, Co-Chair Robinhold, Prosperity Council members, and Mr. Knopp:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments as the Prosperity Council develops its recommendations to inform approaches to achieve goals outlined in the Prosperity Roadmap. The Wild Salmon Center (WSC) works to promote the conservation and sustainable use of wild salmon ecosystems across the Pacific Rim. We identify science-based solutions to sustain wild fish and the human communities and livelihoods that depend on them.

The Roadmap's goals prioritize accelerating Oregon's economic growth, creating more living wage jobs today, and retaining and growing Oregon businesses. The Roadmap highlights Oregon's "exceptional quality of life, marked by clean air, abundant fresh water, and a stunning natural environment" that make Oregon a desirable place to live. Our iconic rivers and landscapes draw people and businesses to the state and motivates people to stay.

The natural values of Oregon's lands and waters must be protected, for the health of all Oregonians and the resilience of the businesses and communities that depend upon clean air and water. The statewide economic strategy in development by the Prosperity Council must prioritize the protection of natural resources as integral to a healthy Oregon and include strategies to ensure cold clean water in Oregon's rivers, thriving populations of wild fish, healthy forests, and a growing restoration economy. All communities benefit from healthy ecosystems. Growth and prosperity must be consistent with the protection of vital ecosystem services, which provide the foundation for Oregon quality of life. These include healthy forests, cold clean water, tourism and recreation, and restoration of habitat for fish and wildlife.

1. **Healthy forests and abundant supplies of cold clean water support sustainable economies and thriving communities across the state of Oregon.**

   Clean water and healthy forests that support fish and wildlife are integral to the livability and welfare of Oregon communities. Abundant supplies of cold, clean water support Oregon's economy through irrigated agriculture, industrial uses, drinking water for communities, recreation, tourism, and commercial fishing. In 2021, commercial fisheries in Oregon generated $642 million alone.[i] Healthy watersheds provide habitat for fish and

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wildlife, store and slow down floodwaters, filter out pollutants, and buffer the impacts of fire and climate change.[ii]

Failing to adequately protect Oregon's natural resources has real consequences for the state's economy, particularly under a changing climate. More extreme weather, from increased flooding to drought, is projected to impact Oregon communities statewide. Changes in precipitation that increase drought risk and decrease snowpack will have significant impacts to irrigated agriculture and other industries that rely upon sustainable supplies of clean water. The Oregon Climate Change Research Institute identifies economic losses from smoke impacts to businesses and tourism, reduced timber prices from wildfire exposure, and adverse public health outcomes related to increased wildfire smoke as projected effects of climate change.[iii]

Many Oregonians recognize and value the importance of protecting the state's natural resources. A 2023 Oregon Values and Beliefs survey found that 53% of Oregonians believe that maintaining a quality environment attracts people and companies to Oregon. The same survey also found that a majority of Oregonians believe that stronger environmental laws and regulations are worth the cost (63%).[iv] The Prosperity Council must include the protection of Oregon's natural resources as foundational to the health of Oregon's economy.

2. **Tourism and outdoor recreation are important economic drivers that depend upon a healthy environment.**

Outdoor recreation in Oregon supported $16 billion in spending that supported 192,000 full or part-time jobs in 2022.[v] As stated in a 2024 analysis by Earth Economics, "outdoor recreation is an important part of Oregon's identity" and a majority (95%) of Oregonians participate in outdoor recreation.[vi] Oregon's rivers, forests, mountains, and coastlines are also a major driver of visitors to the state.[vii]

Fishing, hunting, and wildlife viewing contributed $1.2 billion in spending by Oregonians and visitors in 2019 and supported 11,000 jobs. These activities, which rely upon a healthy environment that is protected and restored, generated $385 million in labor income.[viii] According to Travel Oregon, the Oregon Coast tourism economy is the second largest in the state. In 2018 alone, the Oregon Coast captured 17% ($2.053 billion) of total statewide spending and 59% (17 million) of all visitors to Oregon (29.1 million).[ix] The coastal Oregon counties of Lincoln, Lane, and Coos have the highest percent of the labor force employed by spending in outdoor recreation.[x]

3. **Restoration investments are investments in local communities.**

The labor, materials, and private-sector contracts that result from financial investments in habitat restoration projects is often referred to as the "restoration economy" and offers important benefits to Oregon communities. Increasing investments in these types of projects can particularly benefit rural communities in Oregon. Communities that have traditionally relied upon natural resource extraction are finding new strategies to use natural resources that focus on environmental stewardship and ecological restoration. A study of Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) projects found that 80 percent of grant funding remains in the county where the project is located.[xi] Between 2001 and 2010, habitat restoration in Oregon alone generated up to 6,400 jobs and more than $977 million.[xii] A University of Oregon study found that every $1 million invested in watershed restoration results in an average of 16 to 17 new jobs and averages $2.3 million in economic activity.[xiii] Additionally, researchers have found a strong local bias for hiring related to restoration projects. Between 95% and 99.5% of restoration project managers hired Oregon-based businesses for contracted work.[xiv] The restoration economy offers job creation potential and employment opportunities in fields such as construction, engineering, natural resources. WSC encourages the Prosperity Council to consider the economic benefits, particularly to rural communities and local businesses, connected to a growing restoration economy here in Oregon.

We urge the Prosperity Council to ensure that any recommendations are aligned with the majority of Oregonians that value a healthy environment and protections for clean air and water. These recommendations should prioritize the protection of Oregon's natural resources, and the need for regulations and agencies that implement those protections on behalf of the public. These recommendations should also be aligned with the Governor's Executive Order 25-26 that directs state agencies to promote the resilience of Oregon's lands and waters.[xv] Further, any recommendations should address barriers to supporting a thriving recreation and restoration economy. Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

Stacey Detwiler
Oregon Policy Director
Wild Salmon Center

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[i] Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Oregon Commercial and Marine Recreational Fishing Industry Economic Activity for Years 2020 and 2021.
https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/docs/TRG%20Oregon%20fishing%20industry%202020-2021%20ES.pdf

[ii] Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. State Wildlife Action Plan: Water Quality and Water Quantity. https://swap.oregon.gov/key-conservation-issue/water-quality-and-quantity/.

[iii] Fleishman, E., editor. 2025. Seventh Oregon climate assessment. Oregon Climate Change Research Institute, Oregon State University, Corvallis, Oregon. https://doi.org/10.5399/osu/1181.

[iv] Oregon Values and Beliefs Center, Environment and Land Use, 2023 https://oregonvbc.org/environment-and-land-use/

[v] Mackey, E., Cousins, K., 2024. Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon: 2022 Update. Earth Economics. Tacoma, WA.

[vi] Mackey, 2024.

[vii] OPRD (2018). Outdoor Recreation in Oregon: Responding to Demographic and Societal Change. Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. Salem, OR

[viii] Mojica, J., Cousins, K., Madsen, T., 2021. Economic Analysis of Outdoor Recreation in Oregon. Earth Economics. Tacoma, WA. Factsheet available https://www.dfw.state.or.us/agency/docs/Factsheet-Economic%20Impact%20OR%20Counties-Earth%20Economics%202019.pdf.

[ix] Travel Oregon. Regional Cooperative Tourism Program. 2019. https://industry.traveloregon.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Oregon_Coast-4.pdf
[x] Mackey, 2024.
[xi] Bonner, K., and M. Hibbard. 2002. The economic and community effects of Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Investments in Watershed Restoration. University of Oregon, Institute for a Sustainable Environment, Ecosystem Workforce Program, Briefing Papers.
[xii] Ecotrust. 2012. Oregon's Restoration Economy, Investing in natural assets for the benefit of communities and salmon. p. 4. http://www.ecotrust.org/our-programs/water/.
[xiii] Nielsen-Pincus, M., and C. Moseley. 2010. Economic and employment impacts of forest and watershed restoration in Oregon. University of Oregon, Institute for a Sustainable Environment, Ecosystem Workforce Program, Working Paper Number 24, Spring 2010; Edwards, P.E.T., A.E. Sutton-Grier and C.E. Coyle. 2013 Investing in nature: Restoring coastal habitat blue infrastructure and green job creation. Marine Policy 38:65-71.
[xiv] Nielsen-Pincus, M. and C. Moseley. 2010. "Economic and Employment Impacts of Forest and Watershed Restoration in Oregon." University of Oregon: Ecosystem Workforce Program, Working Paper 24.
[xv] Executive Order 25-26 "Directing State Agencies to Take Urgent Action to Promote the Resilience of Our Communities and Natural and Working Lands and Waters."21 October 2025. https://www.oregon.gov/gov/eo/eo-25-26.pdf.

June 8, 2026

Governor Tina Kotek
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Prosperity Council Co-Chairs Renée James and Curtis Robinhold
Members of the Oregon Prosperity Council

RE: The Prosperity Council's Final Recommendations

Dear Governor Kotek, Co-Chairs James and Robinhold, and members of the Oregon Prosperity Council:

We understand the Prosperity Council is considering draft recommendations to improve the Oregon economy. We are aware that these recommendations may change and are not final. As a result, Tax Fairness Oregon would like to offer our opinion in the hope that it might modify the final result.

We agree with the goal of improving the growth in the Oregon economy. It has been underperforming in comparison with other states since the start of the pandemic and the damaging protests in Portland in 2020. Commercial property values in Portland have suffered, reducing revenues needed to support the city and the county. The state is suffering from federal funding cutbacks and cannot support the needs of the citizens without increasing revenue.

At the same time, we need to remember that over the longer term, Oregon has outpaced national growth and some of the problems we face today are transitory and not based upon current state public policies. Portland suffered from significant vandalism in 2020. The badly implemented attempt to legalize drugs caused additional damage. Intel and Nike, our two largest companies, suffered major layoffs due to their internal problems causing additional economic pain for the state from their local suppliers. Oregon's trade dependent and small business sectors are a bigger share of the national economy than in most states and were hurt by national tariff and trade policies. Fortunately, the impact of these events is reversing and what has been a drag on our economy is shifting to a more positive environment. The drug policy was reversed, vandalism and crime overall are down sharply, Intel and Nike have stopped their bleeding and should begin adding employment and the Supreme Court ended some of the tariffs.

Given this background, we agree with some of the recommendations, have concerns about some, and offer a few we think are missing.

What we like

- Elevating economic development priorities within the executive branch makes sense. We recognize that Oregon is in a serious competition for beneficial growth. Competing means having a clear idea of what benefits Oregonians, a deep knowledge of business conditions, and the flexibility to act when conditions are right.
- Implementing a sales tax would allow us to reduce income taxes to make our tax structure more like other states. However, the total package must remain at least as progressive as it is today to retain our support. California, which has a significant sales tax, also has a more progressive tax system overall than Oregon, showing that adding a sales tax does not necessarily create a regressive system.
- Establishing a process to systematically reduce regulations that are counterproductive. Announcing a goal is easy. Establishing a process to continuously review and eliminate low value regulations is the hard part.

What we don't like

- Simply cutting taxes across the board is counterproductive. Taxes pay for public services. Cutting services reduces economic activity, offsetting the stimulus effect of tax cuts. Further, states with successful economies demand more and better public services. – better schools, safer streets, healthier and adequately-housed people, good roads, and clean air and water. In a healthy economy, a working person should be able to buy healthy food, adequate housing, and consistent health care. Navigating this dynamic requires more than simple solutions.
- At the highest level, this means our state and local governments need to do their job better. In competing for beneficial growth, we can do a lot better. For example, there is ample evidence that we massively overpaid and do not have to continue to give data centers hundreds of millions each year in tax incentives to attract them to Oregon. Yet we continue to do so. This does not deny that data centers have brought some benefits. Thousands of Oregon businesses provide public benefits every day without special incentives. We've constructed a system in which the incentives are an entitlement. You get them if you meet the (very) minimum standards regardless of how large the incentive is. We've built an administrative system that incentivizes capturing the surplus at the expense of other governments and the public at large and allows mega corporations to pit local governments against each other. And we've justified it all with woefully inadequate analysis of public benefits and costs.
- Oregon's treatment of foreign "tax haven" income is equally wasteful. Exemption of this income not only reduces our revenue by hundreds of millions each year, it creates unfair competition for businesses lacking foreign operations and, because corporate income is allocated to the state by sales, provides no incentive to locate facilities or jobs in Oregon.
- Similarly, attaching to other federal level incentives to encourage investment, such as bonus depreciation, does nothing to encourage investments in Oregon. The bulk of the funds just reward investments in other states.
- Finally, TFO supports adjustments to the estate tax exemption to make it more equitable. However, doing it in the pursuit of economic development is misguided. Studies clearly show that taxes are a very minor reason that people choose to move, a conclusion supported by the rapid growth in revenue from the tax itself.

What we think is missing

- Public investments in higher education. Oregon has starved our public universities for decades. We know that an educated workforce will produce positive economic benefits over time, but we keep failing to make those investments.
- Addressing our infrastructure needs. The public has voted down the transportation package, but without addressing our deteriorating roads and bridges we will do long term damage to the state economy.

Going forward

- Reducing tax rates in the pursuit of economic growth without dealing with existing wasteful practices is fiscal folly. The state should eliminate wasteful tax incentives based on a careful analysis of benefits and costs and awareness of economic opportunities. New or modified incentives should be structured to reward investments that maximize public benefits rather than just meet minimum standards. The incentives should recognize the benefits provided by Oregon-based businesses. At minimum, the incentives should be judged by their ability to efficiently incentivize family-wage jobs, such as the recently passed jobs credit for qualified businesses.

- The state should replace the current administrative system that focuses solely on increased activity regardless of the external costs and who must bear them. Instead, the structure should be focused on maximizing the benefits for the citizens of the state, be empowered to act when conditions are right, and be accountable for results. Such a system would seek investments that use Oregon's resources efficiently, minimize negative impacts on the things that make Oregon a good place to live, and would not otherwise occur.
- Any reduction of overall tax rates should be conditioned on the elimination of wasteful incentives and tempered by the realization that the federal government is actively making it harder for working people to live off their income and shifting the cost of dealing with the consequences to the state.

Sincerely,

Jody Wiser, John Calhoun, Jim Scherzinger
Tax Fairness Oregon

APPENDIX F

Technical Report:
Data & Research

Oregon Prosperity Council

Appendix F: Technical Report – Data and Research

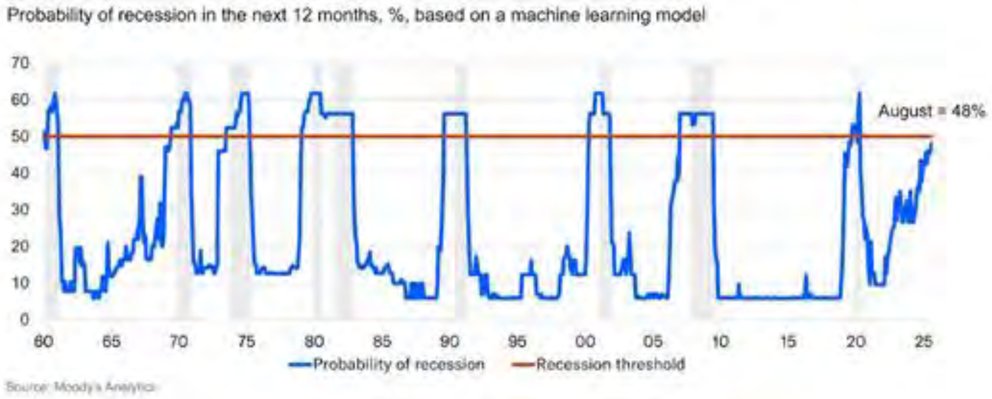
Section 1:
Economic Competitiveness

ECOnorthwest

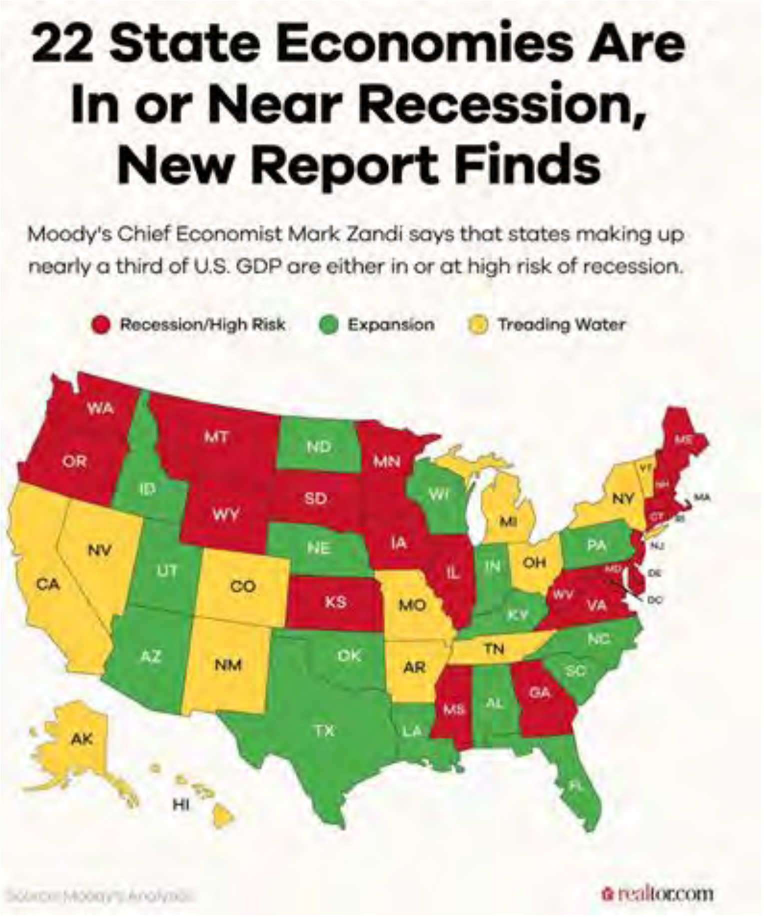
National context informing Oregon's economic crisis

Mark Zandi
@Markzandi

There is an uncomfortably high 48% probability that the U.S. economy will suffer a recession in the next 12 months. That's according to Moody's recently unveiled leading economic indicator, derived using a machine learning algorithm on our extensive databases. It's less than 50%, but historically, the probability has never gotten this high, and a recession has not ensued.

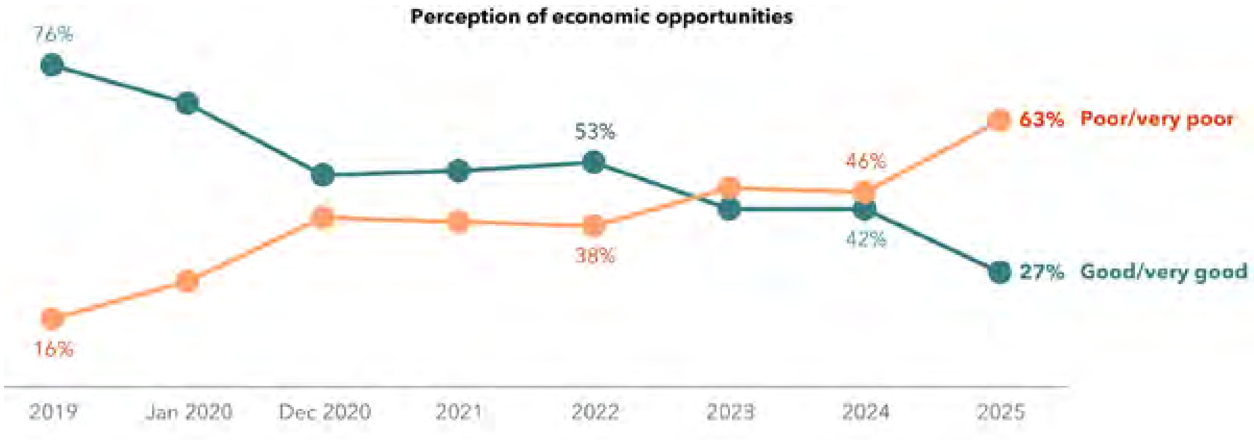


The variable with the most predictive power in the Moody's recession model is building permits



High taxes and cost of living are growing concerns in the Metro

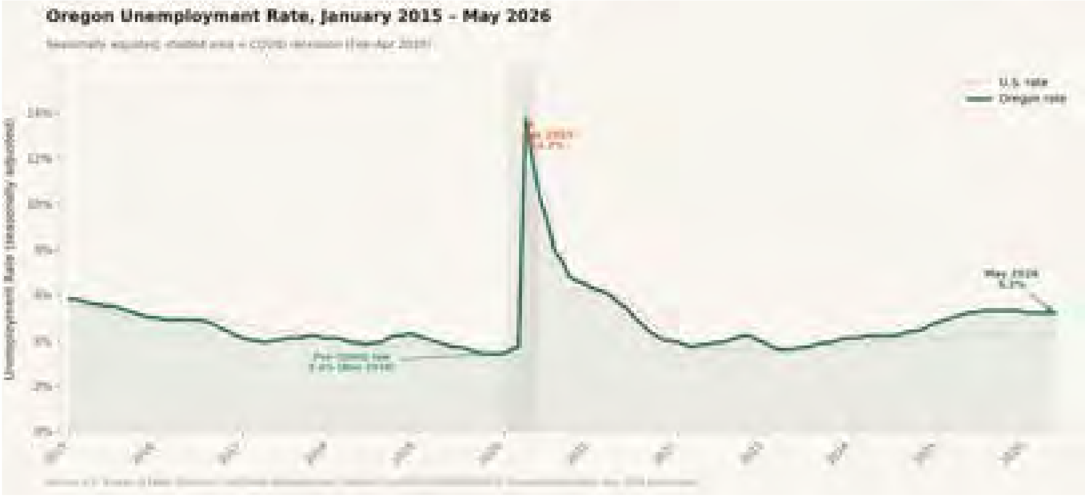
For the first time, most Metro voters feel their economic opportunities are poor, and positive perceptions of economic opportunities are at an all time low



Source: DHM, PMC economy survey, December 2025

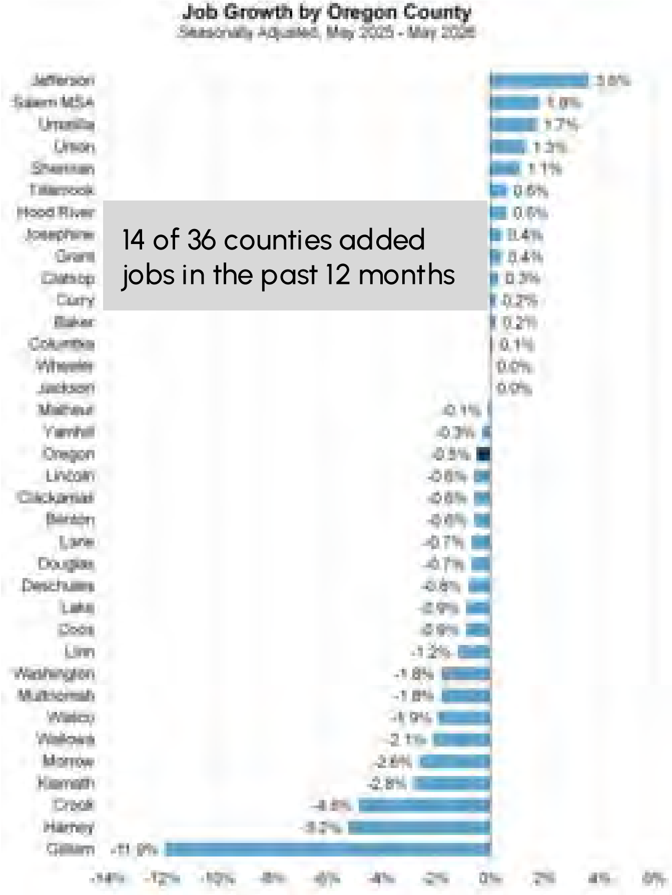
Source: Oregonian, from DHM, PMC economy survey, December 2025

Unemployment rate statewide increasing faster than nationally

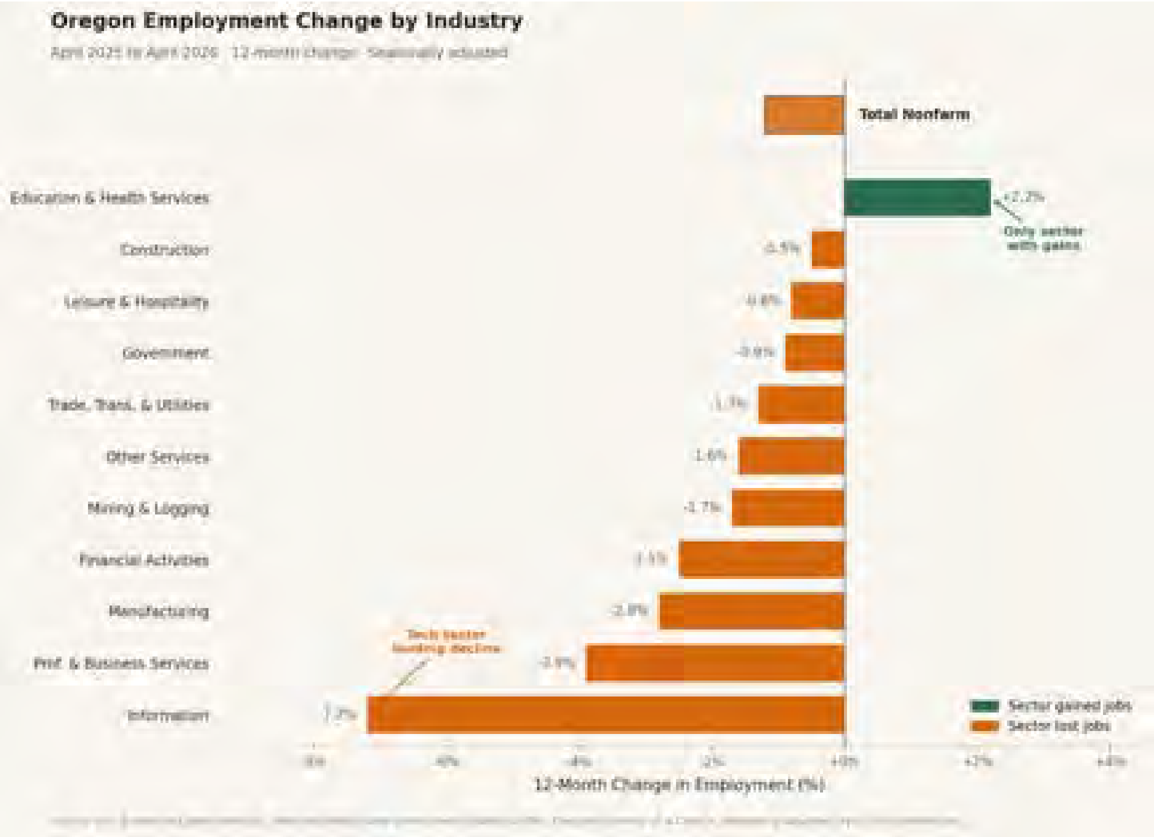


Source: Oregon Employment Department

Oregon lost 9,100 jobs over the past 12 months, 3 county metro lost 16k



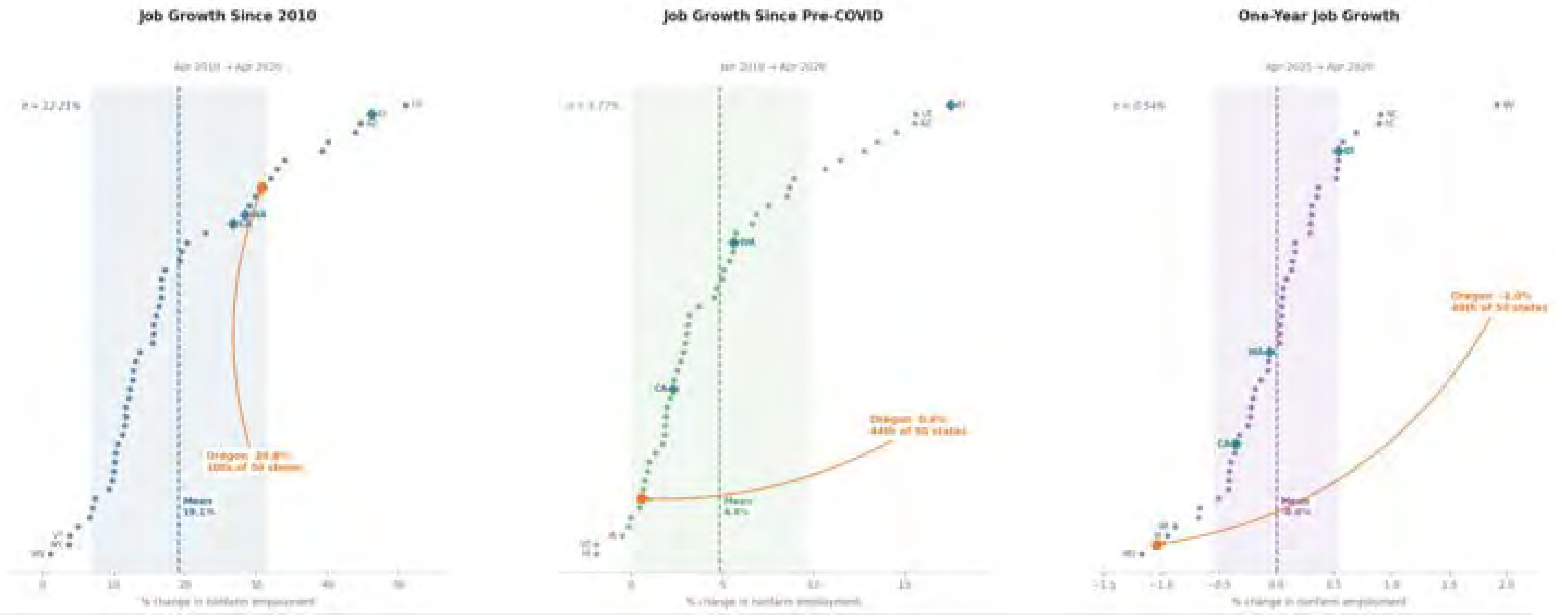
14 of 36 counties added jobs in the past 12 months



Source: Oregon Employment Department, CES Seasonally Adjusted

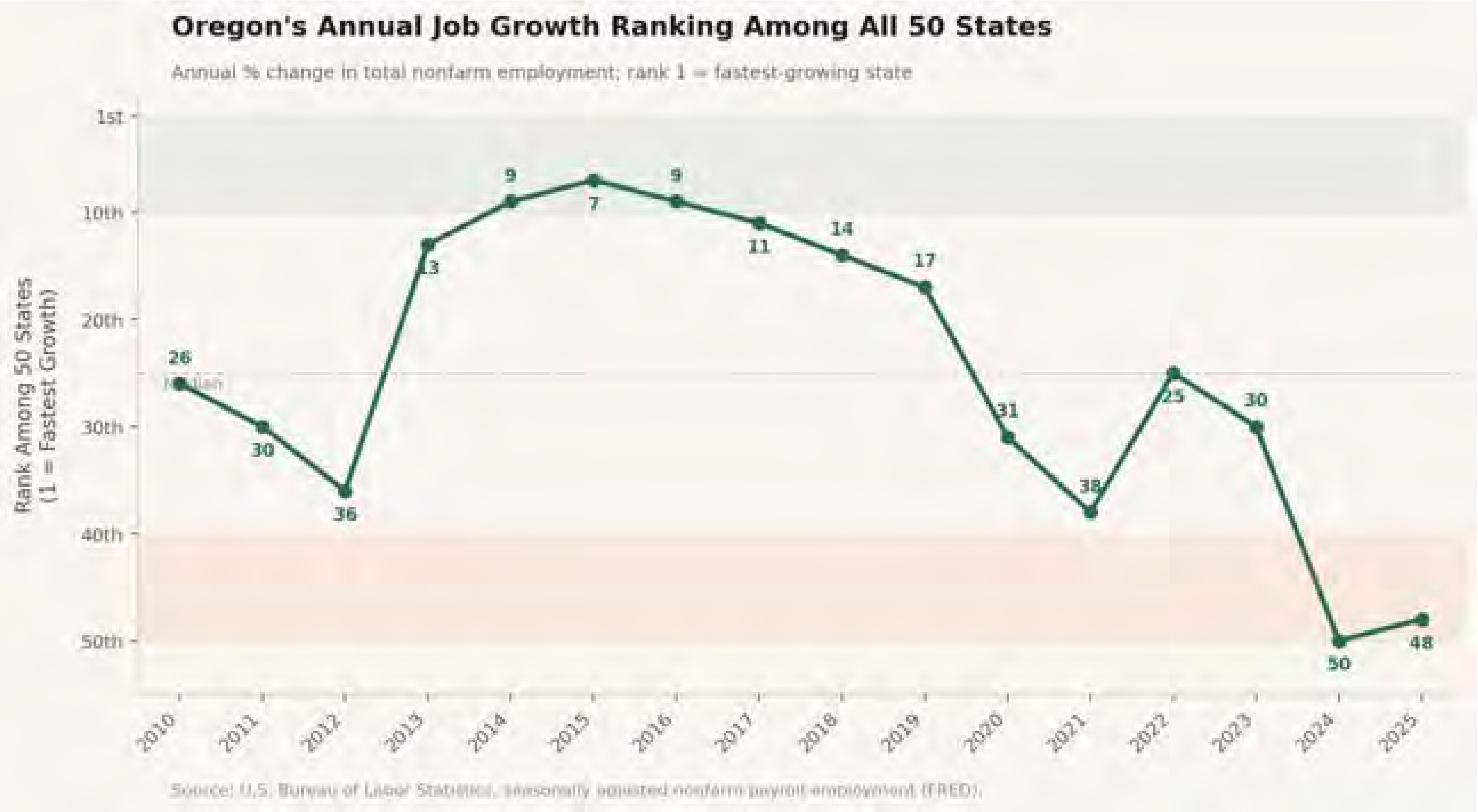
Job growth performance highly sensitive to reference period

State non-farm employment change ranking

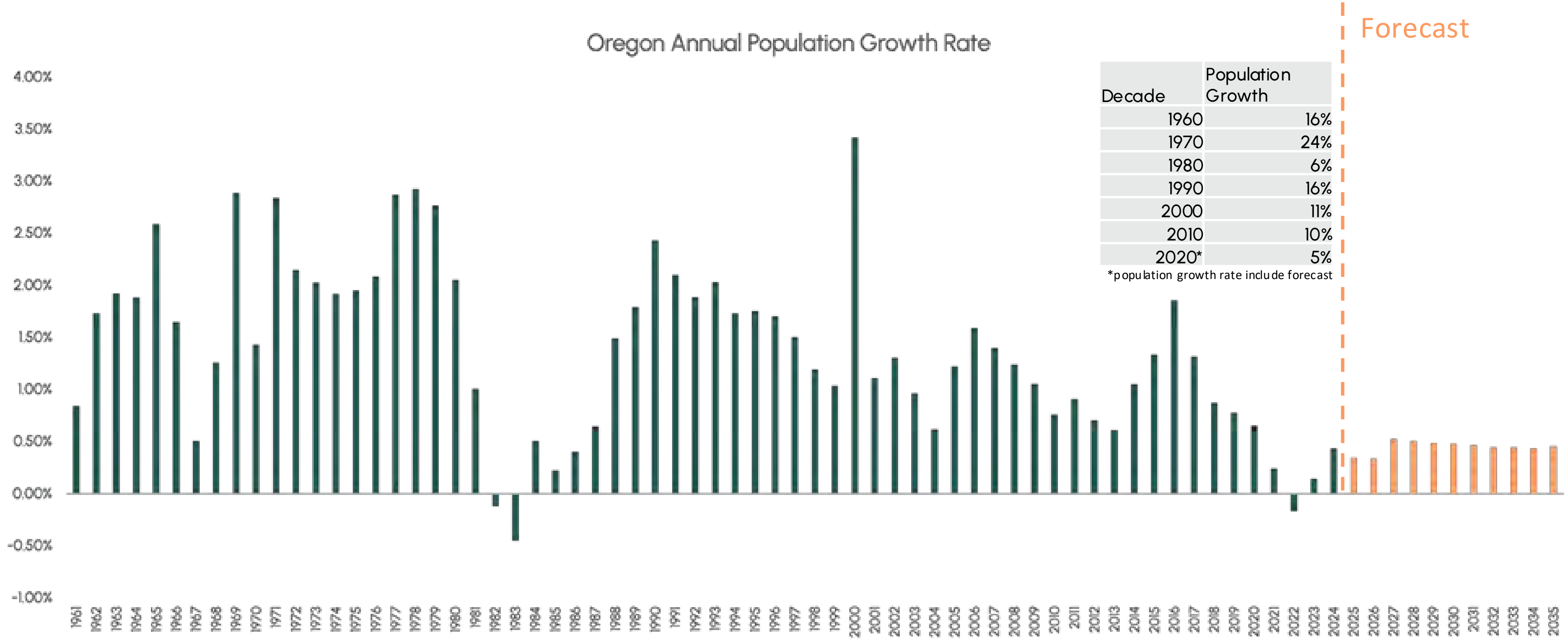


Source: BLS via FRED

Oregon's annual job growth ranking was trending down pre-pandemic, then amplified



Population growth rate expected to be half of previous 30 year trend

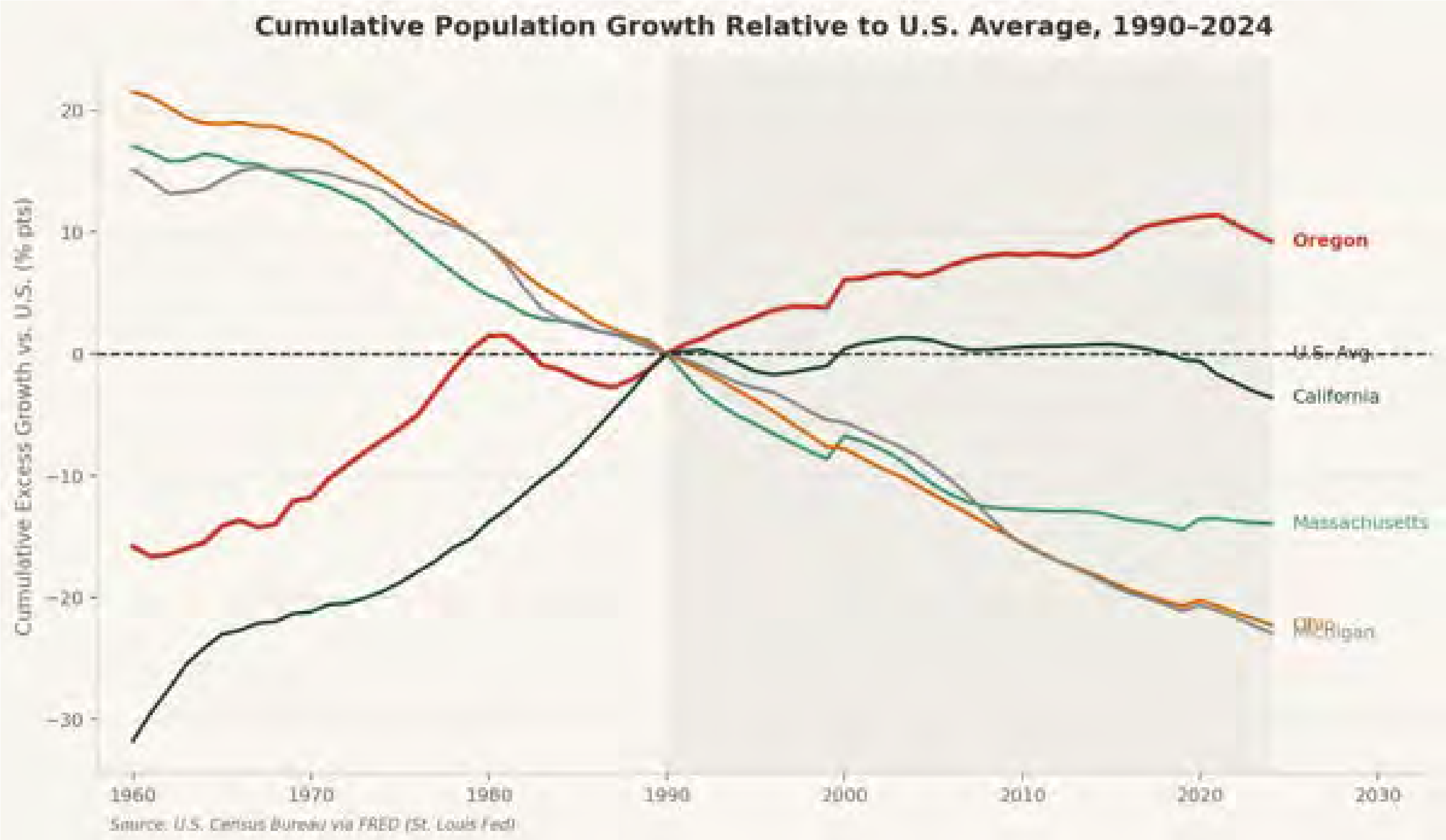


Decade	Population Growth
1960	16%
1970	24%
1980	6%
1990	16%
2000	11%
2010	10%
2020*	5%

*population growth rate include forecast

Source: Oregon Office of Economic Analysis

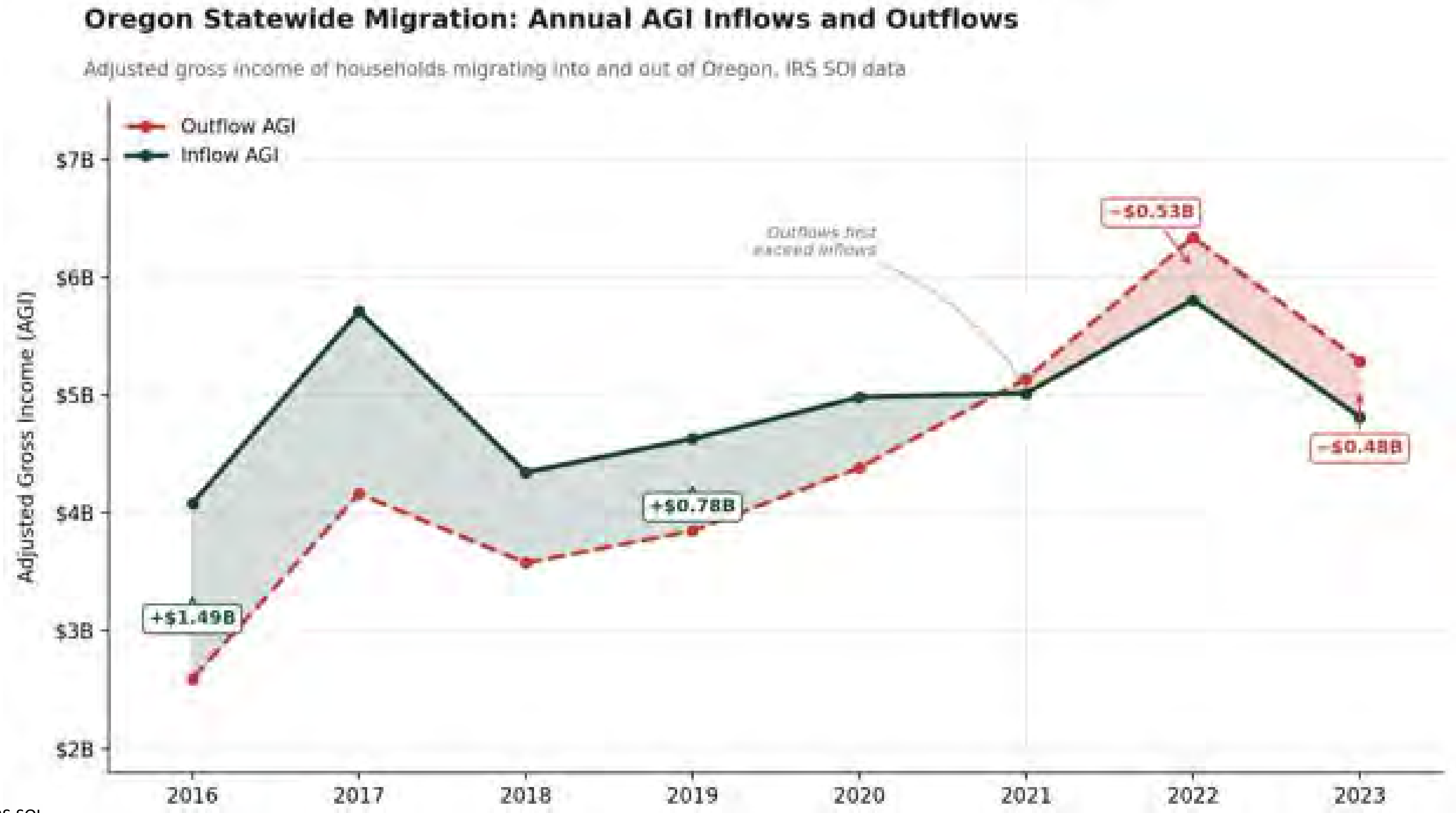
Oregon population growth has stagnated in past decade compared to U.S.



Full time worker median wages in Oregon growing faster than U.S.

Gap in median income in Oregon is primarily a structural gap from less full-time work

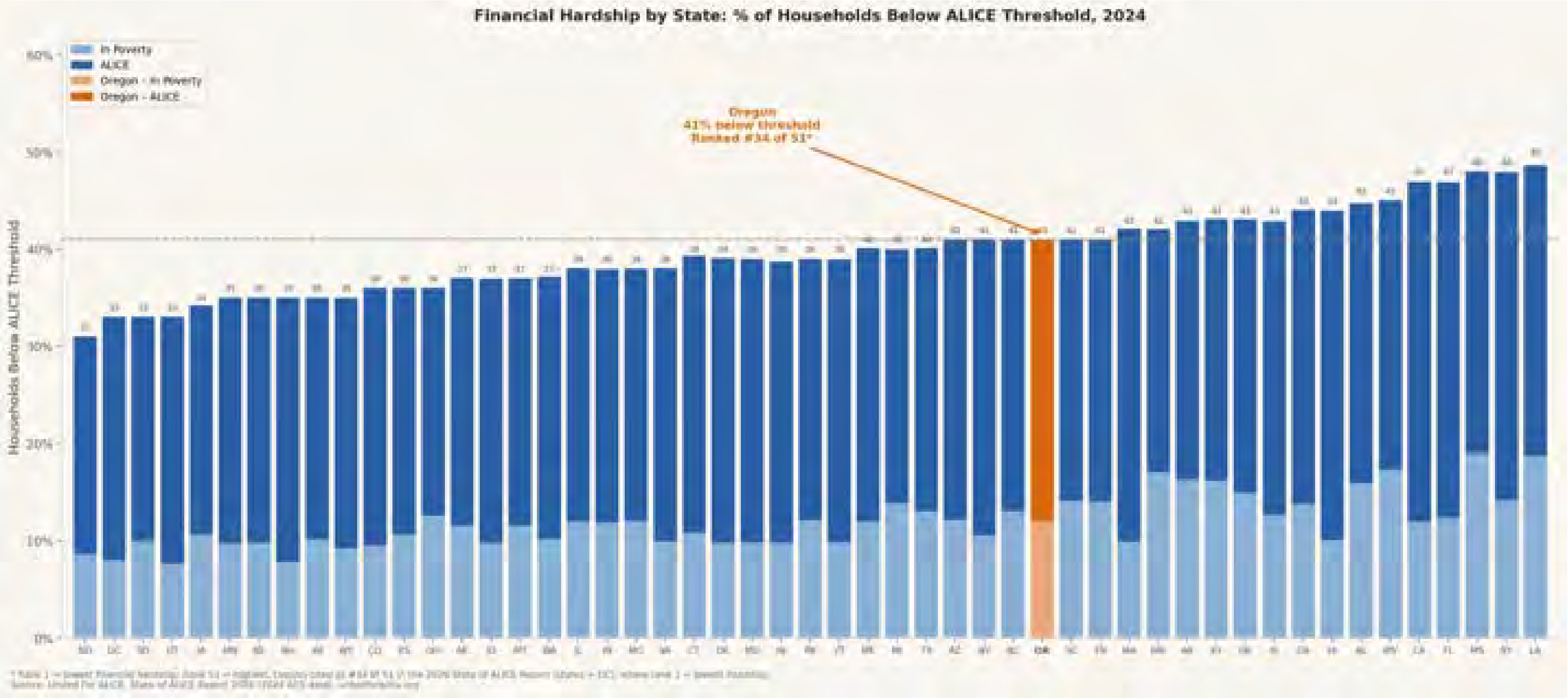
Statewide net loss of $500 million in income through migration in last 2 years



Source: IRS SOI

Oregon's income trajectory was similar to Rust Belt states through 2010

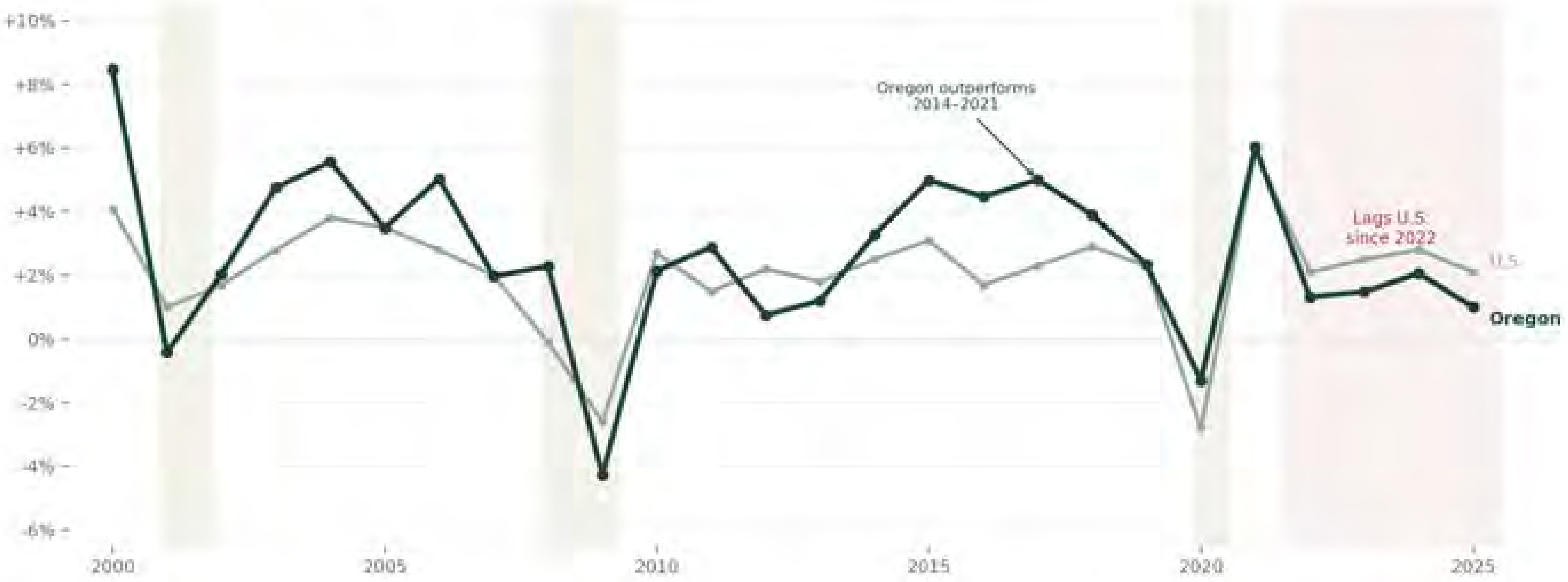
ALICE data represent HHs not earning enough to cover basic necessities



Oregon's GDP growth has typically exceed the national rate until the past 3 years

Oregon Real GDP Growth vs. U.S.: A Story of Outperformance Then Reversal

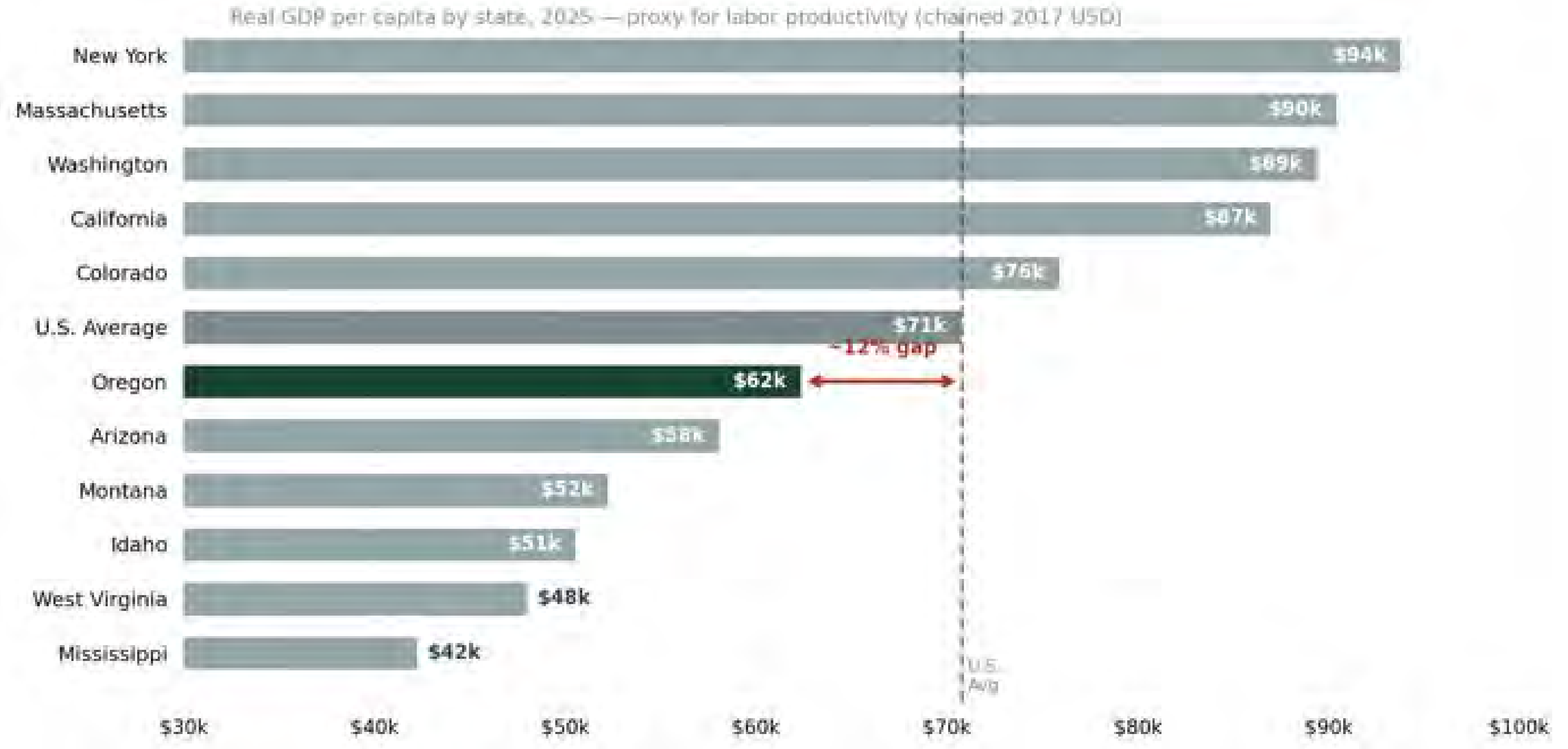
Annual percent change in real GDP | Gray bands = recessions



Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), Annual GDP by State, Table SAGDP1. Updated April 2026.

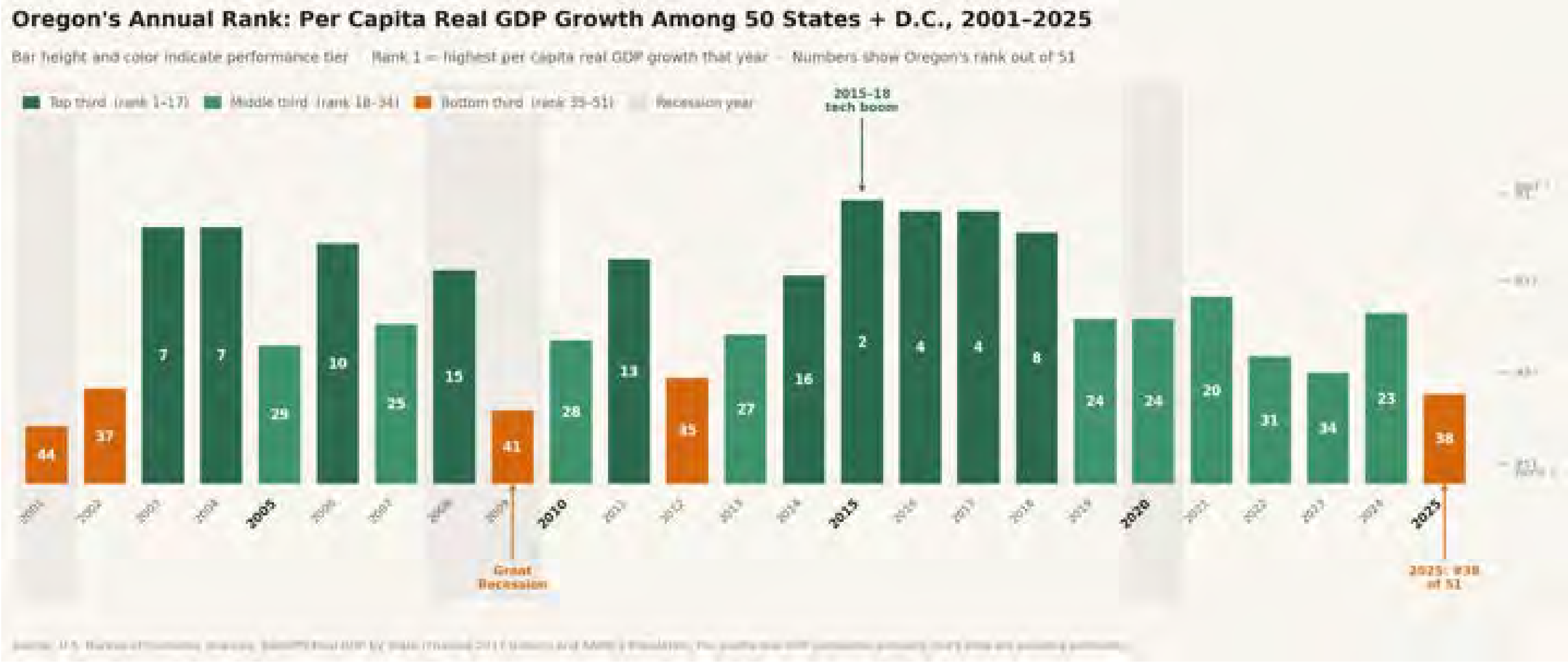
ECOnorthwest

Current productivity in Oregon lags the national average by 12%

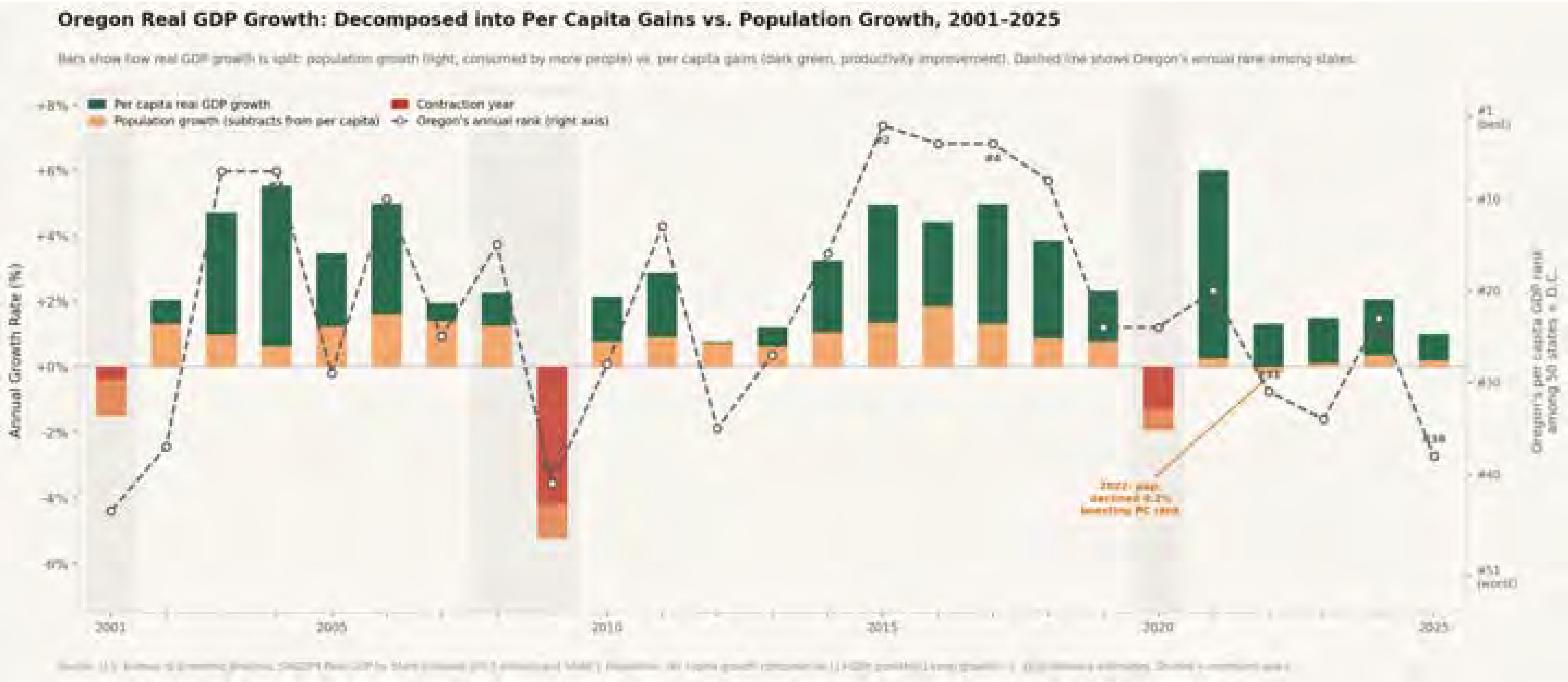


Source: BEA, U.S. Census PEP

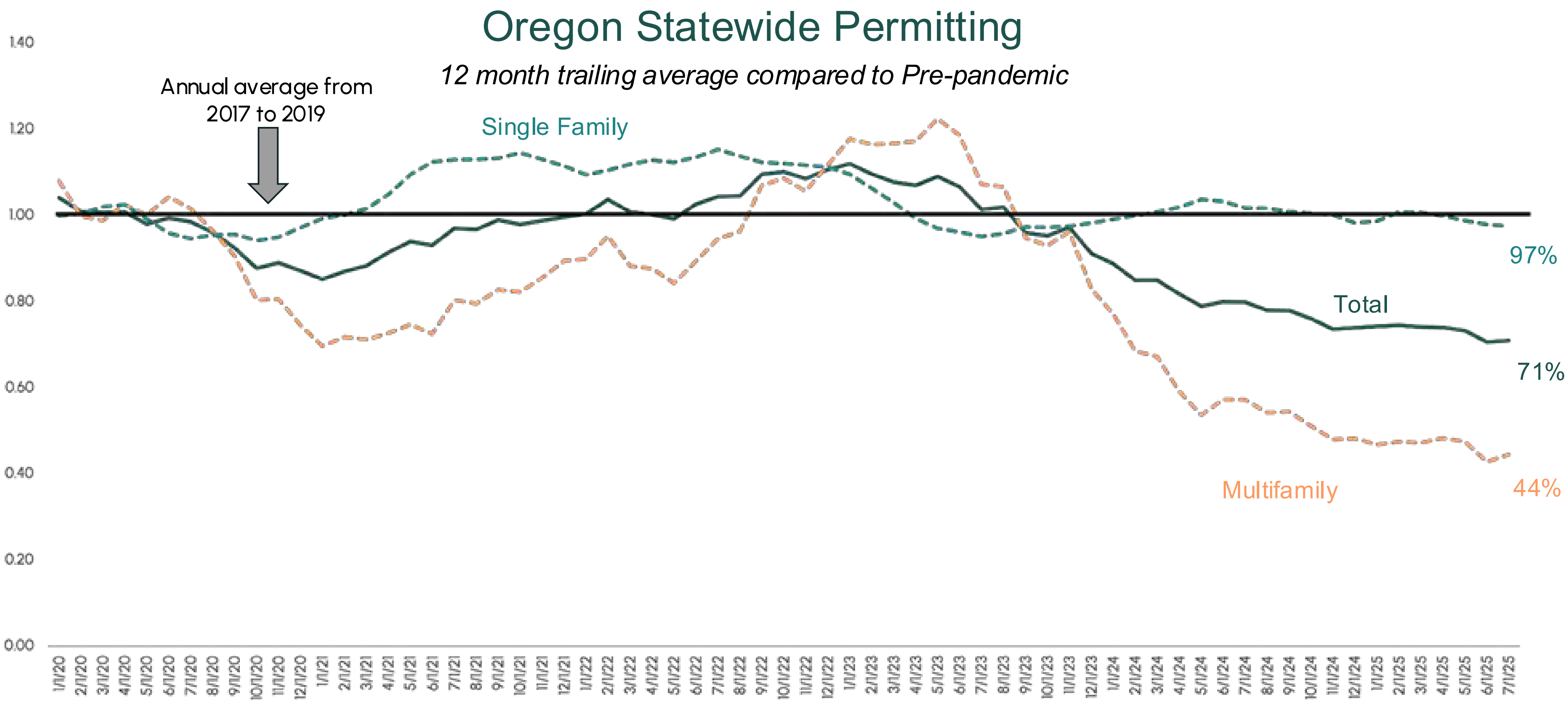
Oregon's productivity growth has been eroding since peaking from 2015 to 2018



Productivity is a combined measure of both population and GDP change



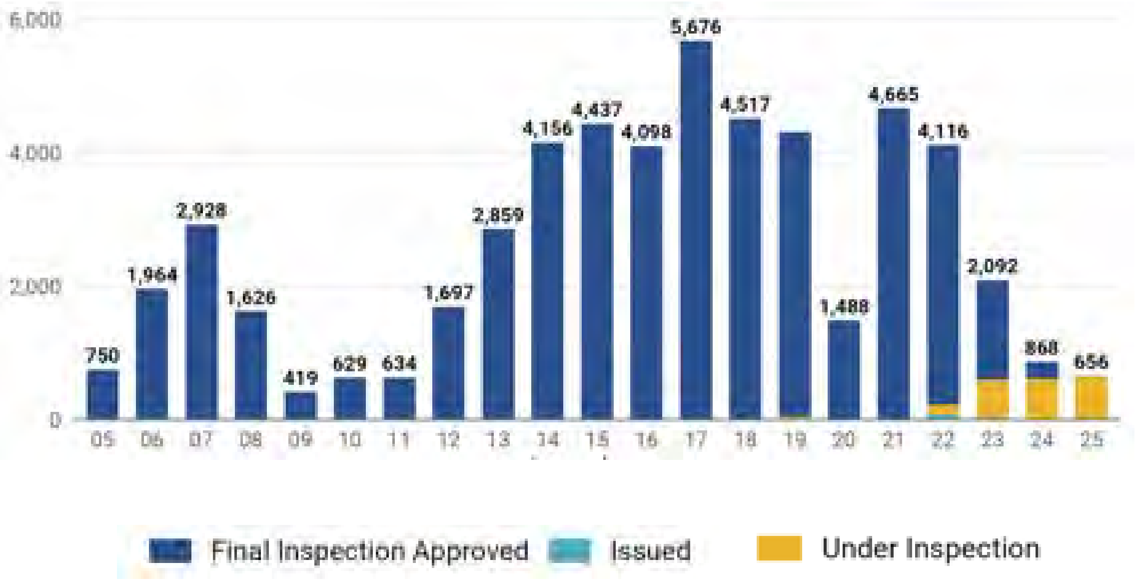
Single family permitting statewide unchanged from pre-pandemic



Source: HUD SOCDS

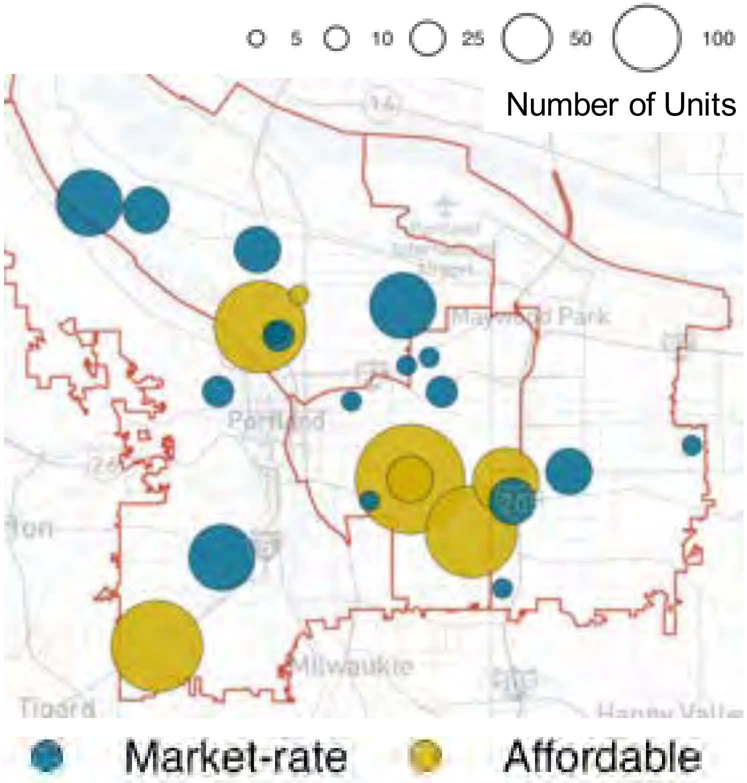
No Market rate projects over 50 units in Portland Central City

City of Portland Multifamily Permitting
(through December 2025)

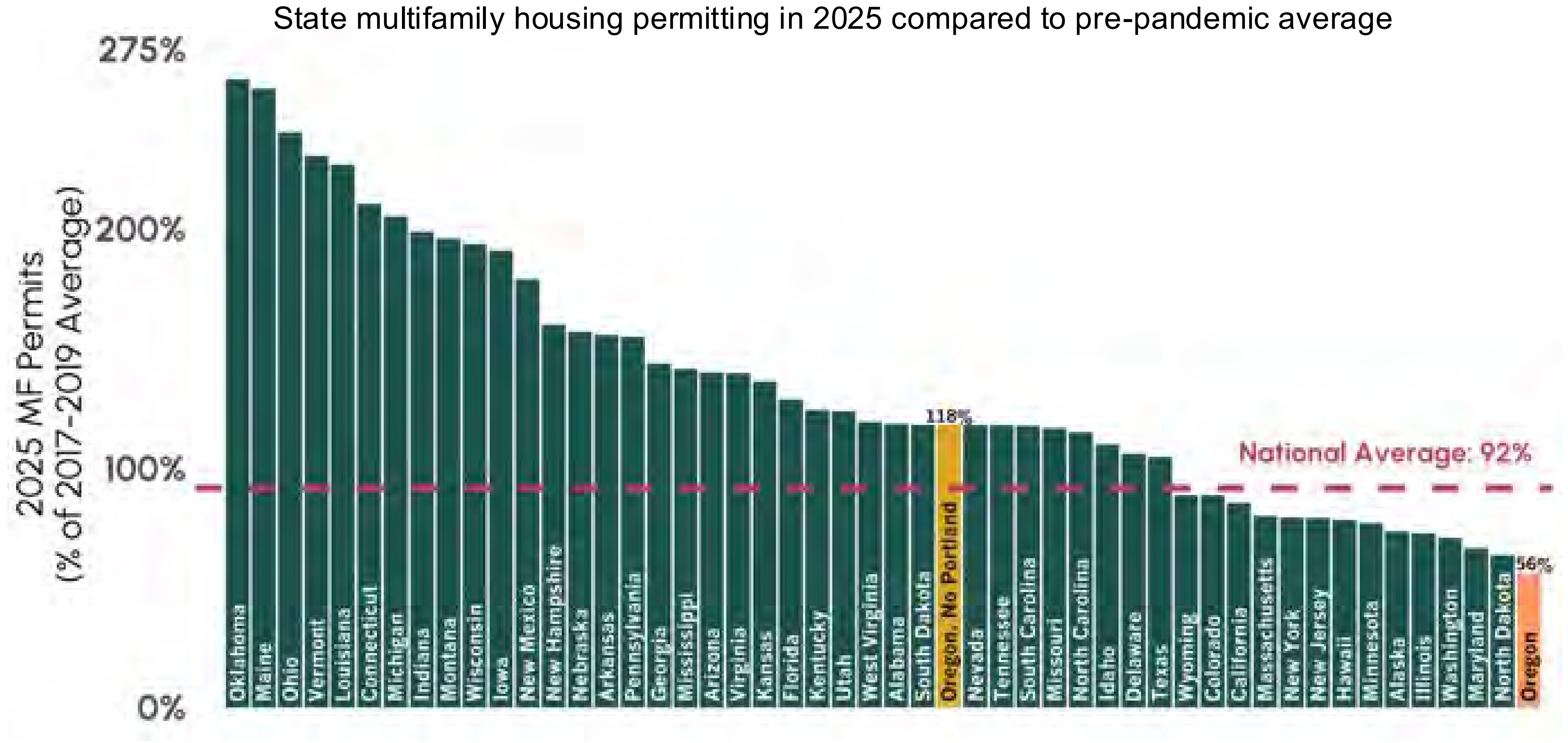


Source: City of Portland, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability

Multifamily Permits in 2025

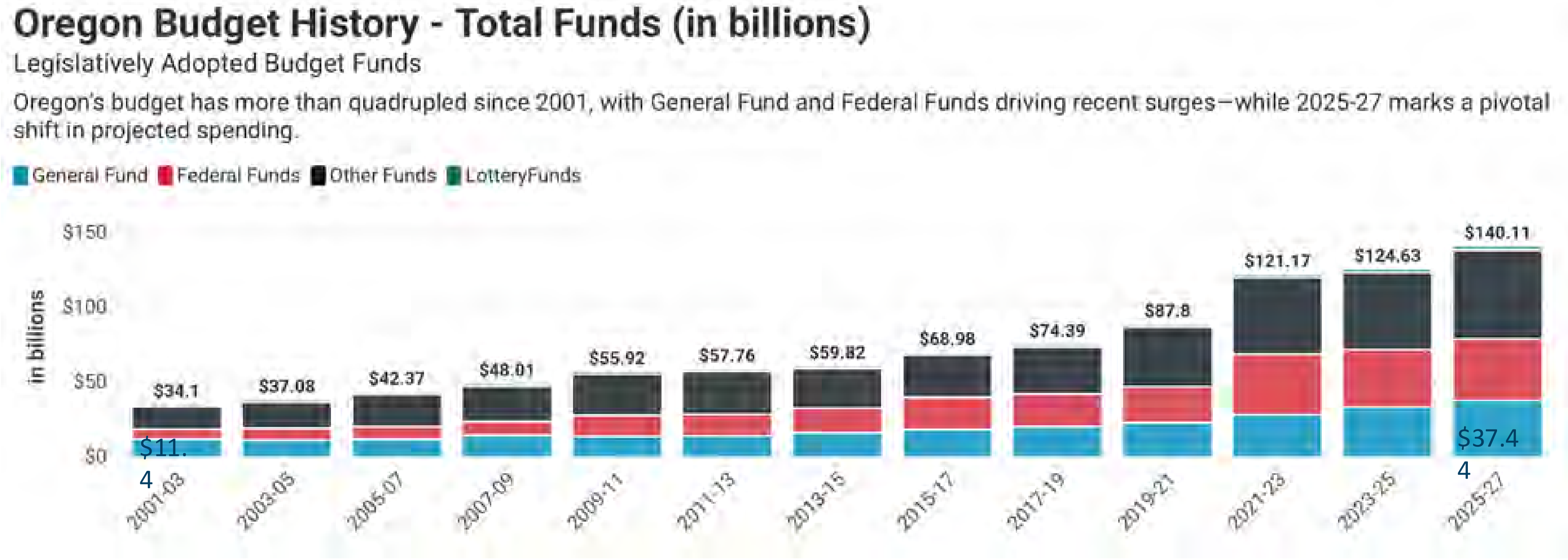


Oregon has the largest multifamily permitting decrease, entirely a Portland effect



Source: U.S. Census Bureau SOCDS

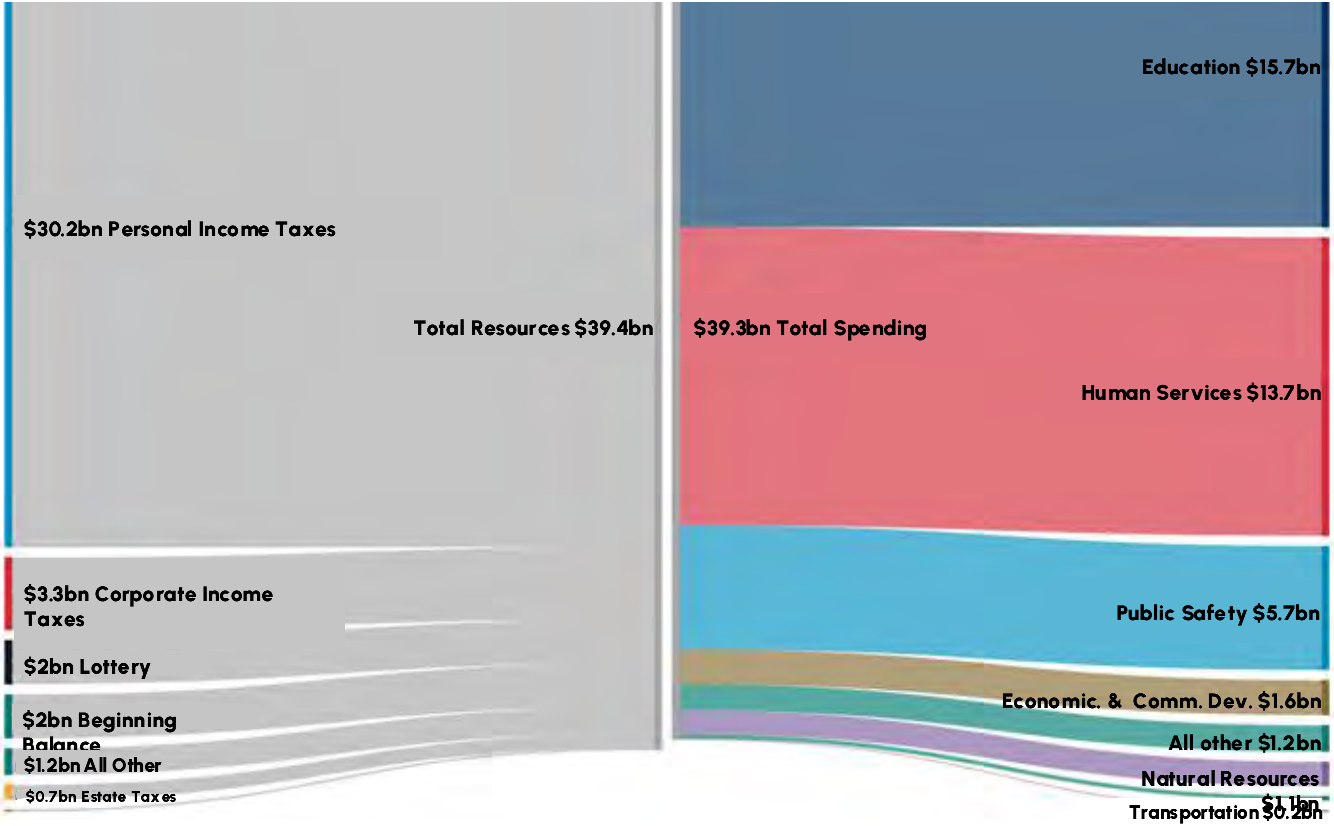
State expenditures have increased 4x since 2001



Source: Common Sense Institute, State of Oregon

General fund is 85% reliant on personal income, decreasing as a share of total expenses

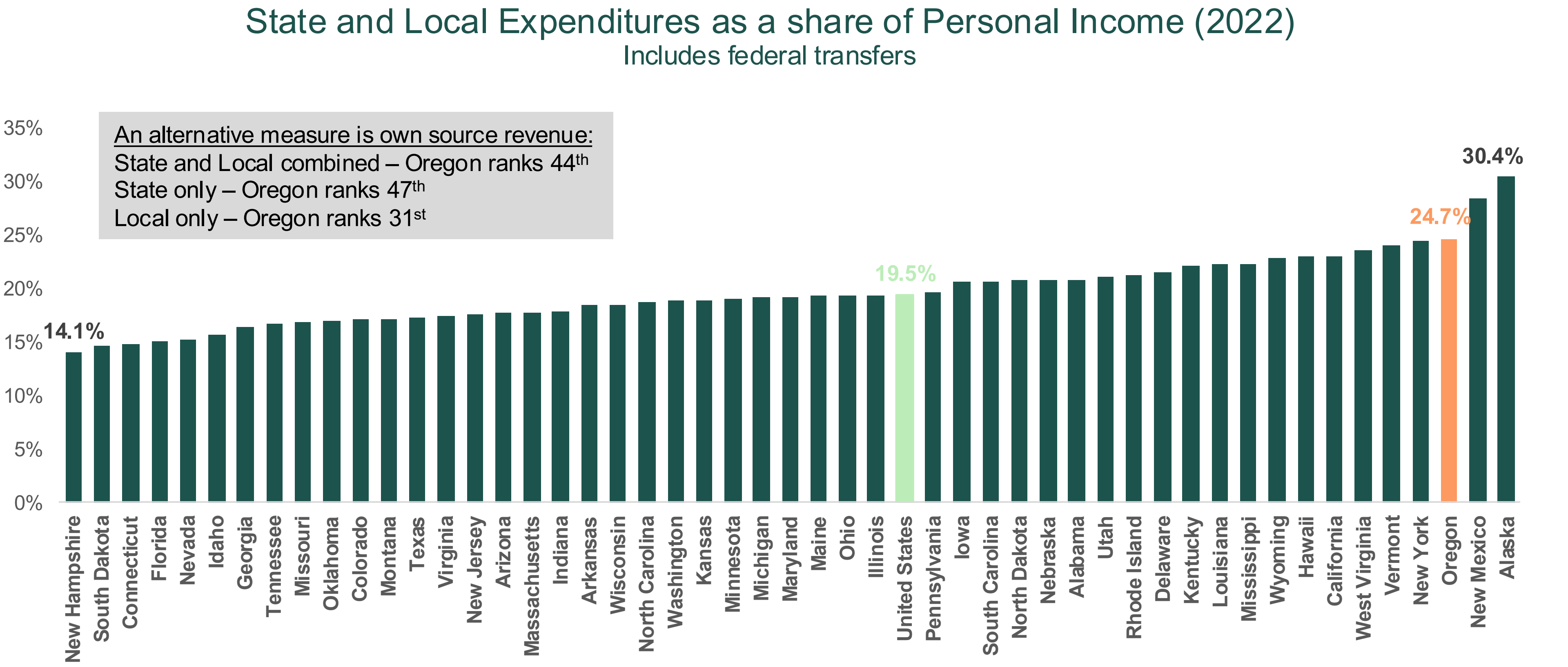
2025-27 General Funds/Lottery Funds Budget



Since 2001, the general fund share of total expenditures has decreased from 33% to 27%

Source: Common Sense Institute, State of Oregon

Oregon ranks near the top of expenditures and own source revenue as a share of personal income



Note: A true apples-to-apples comparison of state expenditure is challenging, reporting at the state and local levels aren't always consistent, and unique factors like the Kicker in Oregon make interpretation challenging

Sources: U. S. Census Bureau Annual Survey of State and Local Government Finances, 1977-2022 (compiled by the Urban Institute), U. S. Bureau of Economic Analysis

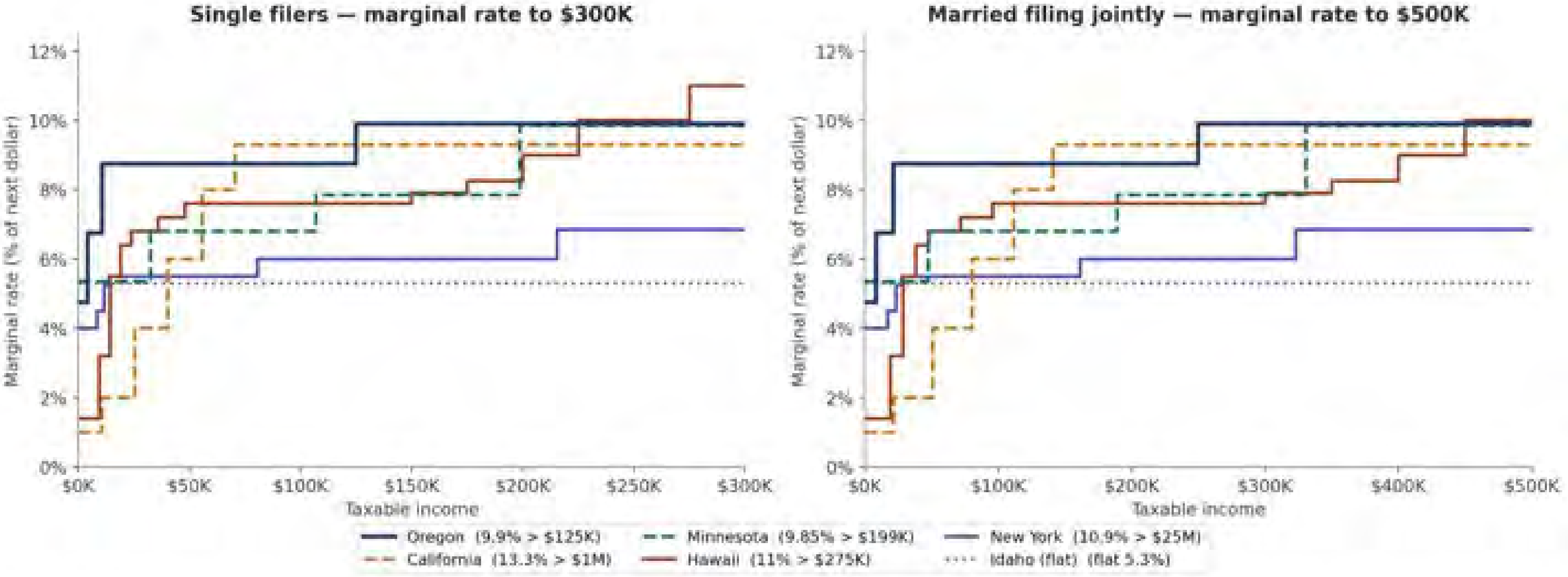
Section 2:

Tax Burden

ECOnorthwest

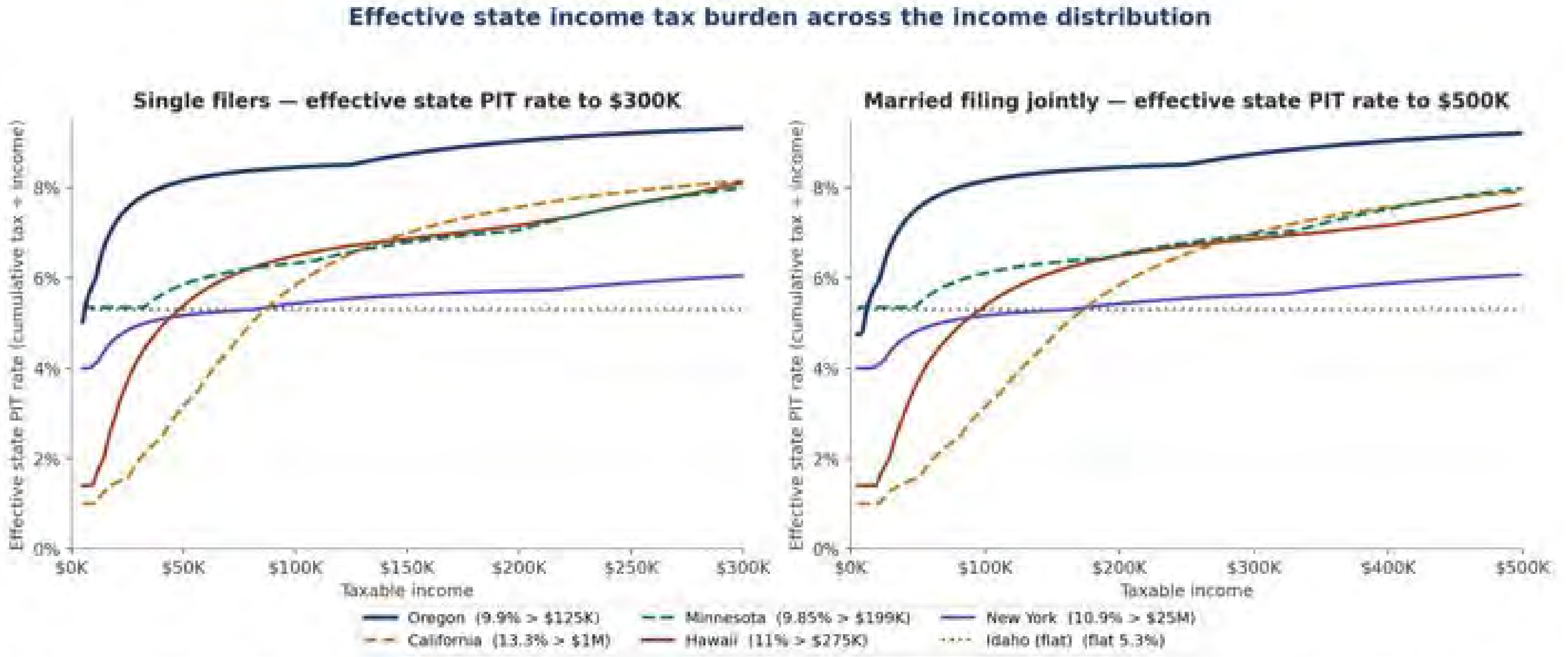
Oregon's top marginal rate hits earlier than any other state

Comparing state personal income tax marginal rate structure



Source: ECONorthwest analysis of state DOR bracket schedules, TY2025. Top rate notation shows ultimate top rate and the income at which it begins.

Oregon taxes incomes at higher rates across the income distribution



Source: ECONorthwest analysis of state DOR bracket schedules, TY2025. Effective rate = cumulative state PIT ÷ taxable income.

To evaluate overall tax burden, compared 4 HH types across neighboring states

HH1 **Single filer, $40,000 wages**

No dependents · Median 1-person Oregon HH (PUMS)

Federal bracket: 12% · Oregon bracket: 8.75% · No EITC

HH2 **MFJ + 1 child, $80,000 wages**

Single-earner · ~34th percentile of 3-person Oregon HHs

Federal bracket: 12% · Full CTC · OR bracket: 8.75%

HH3 **MFJ + 1 child, $108,000 wages**

Dual-earner · Median 3-person Oregon HH (PUMS)

Federal bracket: 12% · Full CTC · OR bracket: 8.75%

HH4 **MFJ + 2 children, $130,000 wages**

Dual-earner · 54th percentile of 4-person Oregon HHs (PUMS)

Federal bracket: 12% · Full CTC × 2 · OR bracket: 8.75%

Four states

Oregon	(statewide) — high PIT reliance, kicker credit, no sales tax
Washington	no state PIT, sales tax + B&O, WA Cares + PFML payroll
California	graduated PIT to 13.3%, sales tax, SDI payroll
Idaho	flat 5.3% PIT, sales tax with grocery credit, no state payroll

Took a comprehensive approach to quantifying overall tax burden

Included

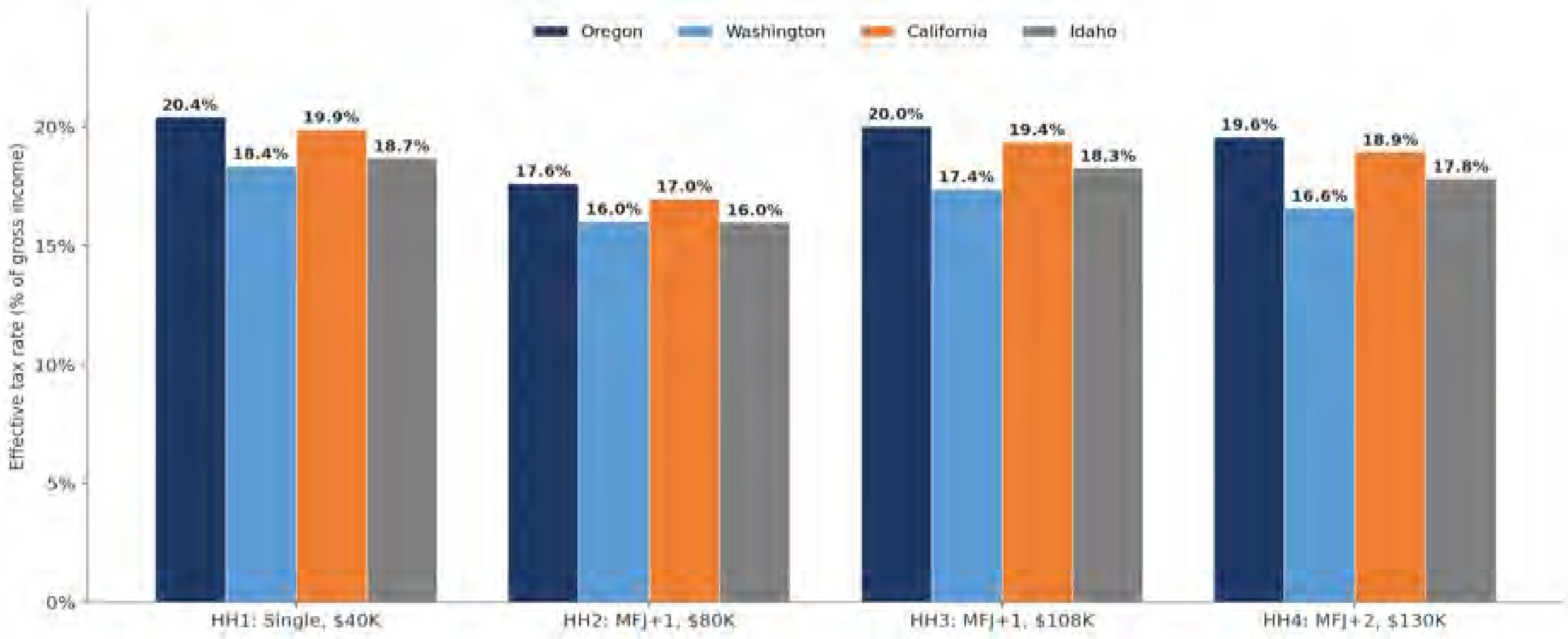
- ✓ Federal income tax (after Child Tax Credit)
- ✓ FICA (employee share: 6.2% SS + 1.45% Medicare)
- ✓ State personal income tax
- ✓ **Oregon kicker credit (weighted average 15%)**
- ✓ State payroll taxes (Paid Leave, STT, PFML, Cares, SDI)
- ✓ State + local sales tax
- ✓ Idaho grocery credit
- ✓ Oregon CAT pass-through (60% borne by consumers)
- ✓ Washington B&O pass-through (analogous to CAT)

Excluded

- ✗ Property tax — varies materially by locality and home value
- ✗ Selective excise (gasoline, alcohol, tobacco)
- ✗ Employer-paid federal payroll (FUTA, employer share of FICA)
- ✗ Unemployment insurance (employer experience-rated, varies)
- ✗ Employer health insurance contributions
- ✗ Portland local income taxes (SHS, PFA)
- ✗ TriMet payroll tax (Portland Metro only — statewide Oregon scope)

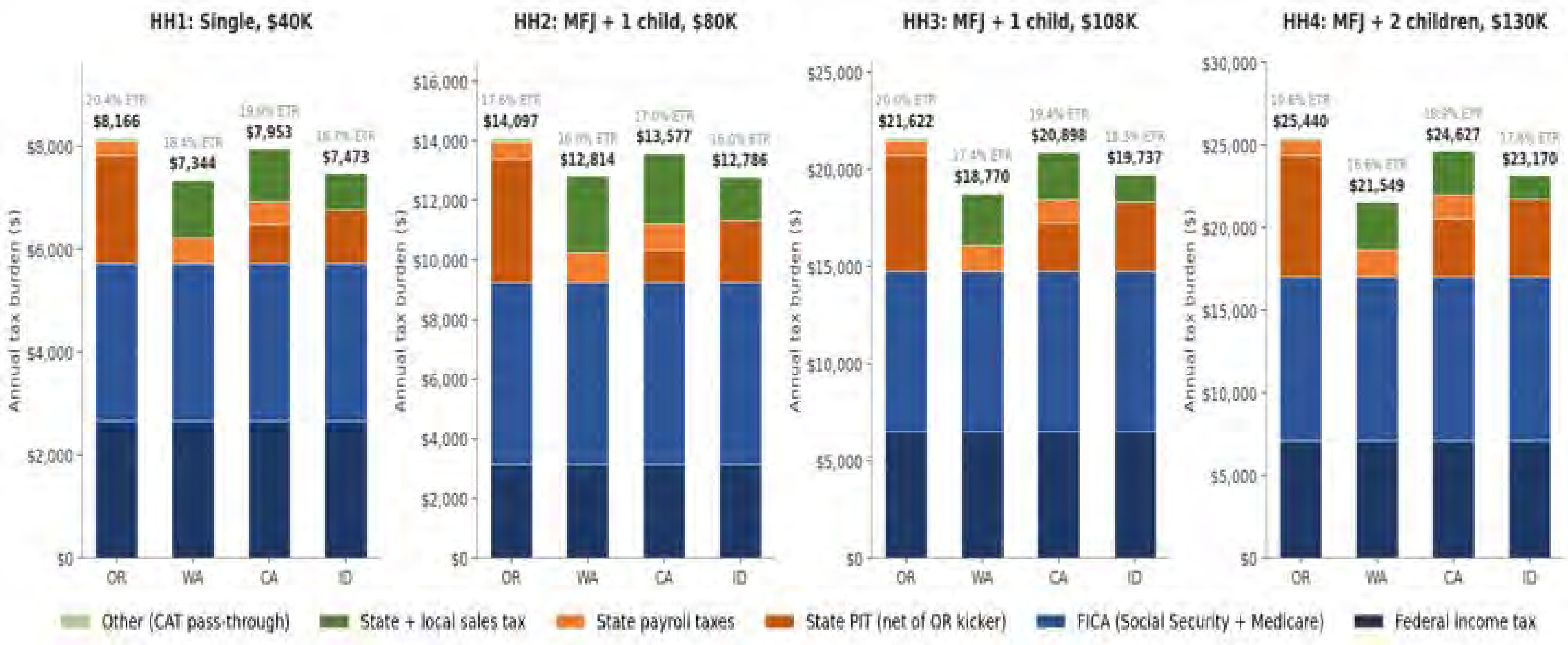
Property taxes are not included because it is unclear that they meaningfully vary across states, they also vary within HHs inthe same income range. For example, a HH on a low fixed income with wealth may own a high value home without a mortgage. For renter households, some high-income households choose to spend less than 30% of their income on rent, and lower income households are often severely cost burdened, spending more than 50% of their income on rent.

Effective tax burdens are highest in Oregon across these middle income HHs



Oregon is highest for all four households, the gap to Washington is 2.0% at $40K, 1.6% at $80K, 2.6% at $108K, and 3.0% at $130K.

Federal taxes are a larger share than state/local across these HHs

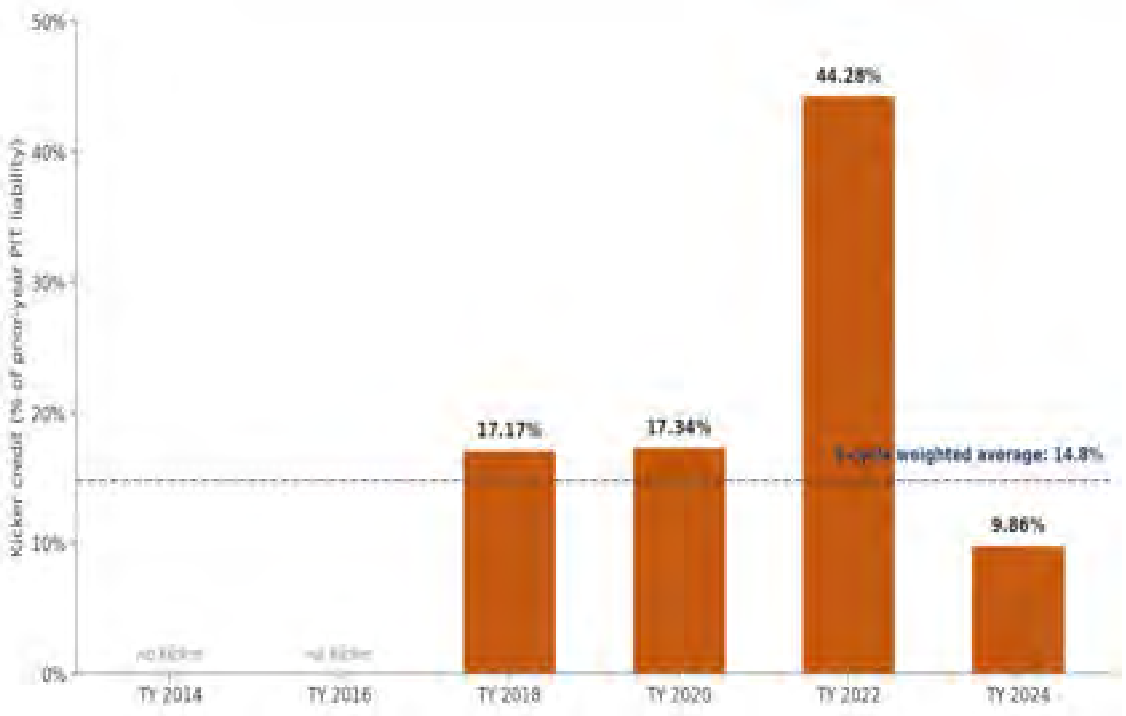


Federal taxes are a larger share of taxes than state/local at these income ranges, roughly 70% of HH1's burden, 65% of HH2's, 67% of HH3's, and 69% of HH4's is federal

Source: ECONorthwest analysis of IRS, ODOR, FTB, ISTC, WA DOR/ESD, BLS CES (TY2025)

Modeling a kicker return based upon recent history might overstate future impact

Kicker Credit as a share of Personal Income Tax Liability



Oregon's constitutional 2% kicker returns excess revenue when collections exceed the close-of-session forecast. **Triggered in 4 of the last 6 cycles.** Default rate used here: 15% (6-cycle weighted average).

Dollar impact for these households

HH1 ($40K): −$369 / year
HH2 ($80K): −$730 / year
HH3 ($108K): −$1,053 / year
HH4 ($130K): −$1,297 / year

Without the kicker, Oregon's state+local burden would be meaningfully further above Washington for all four households.

Source: Oregon DOR, LRO Kicker Report #1-24

Section 3:

Comprehensive Tax Reform Scenarios

Moving from a CAT to a VAT can be revenue neutral and more efficient

Hypothetical example of supply chains and tax mechanisms

1. Current Oregon CAT — tax on commercial activity at each stage

Each transaction is taxed on the FULL sale price (×0.65 after the 35% subtraction). Same economic activity is taxed multiple times as it moves through production.

Logger
harvests timber

Sale price:	$1,000
Tax base (×0.65):	$650
CAT owed:	$2.71

→ timber →

Sawmill
processes into lumber

Sale price:	$2,500
Tax base (×0.65):	$1,625
CAT owed:	$9.26

→ lumber →

Builder
constructs a house

Sale price:	$5,000
Tax base (×0.65):	$3,250
CAT owed:	$18.53

→ house →

Final buyer
pays
$5,000

Total CAT collected
$31.50
on a $5,000 final sale
0.63% effective rate

The pyramiding problem:
[illegible]

2. A value-added tax (VAT) — only the value ADDED at each stage is taxed

Each firm is taxed on (Sales − Purchases). Total value added across the chain equals the final sale price — no double-counting.

Logger
no input purchases

Sales:	$1,000
− Purchases:	$0
Value added:	**$1,000**
VAT @ 0.63%:	**$6.30**

→

Sawmill
buys timber from logger

Sales:	$2,500
− Purchases:	$1,000
Value added:	**$1,500**
VAT @ 0.63%:	**$9.45**

→

Builder
buys lumber from mill

Sales:	$5,000
− Purchases:	$2,500
Value added:	**$2,500**
VAT @ 0.63%:	**$15.75**

→

Final buyer
pays
$5,000

Total VAT collected
$31.50
same $5,000 final sale
0.63% uniform effective rate

The key insight:
[illegible]

Side-by-side at a glance

Current CAT
$2.71 + $9.26 + $18.53 = **$31.50** on the 3 transactions
Tax base differs by industry structure (long chains penalized)

VAT @ 0.63%
$6.30 + $9.45 + $15.75 = **$31.50** on the value added at each stage
Tax base is the same regardless of how many firms touch the product

Moving from a CAT to a VAT, different administrative approaches

1. Two ways to compute a VAT

A. Subtractive method (account-based)

Used in: Japan [illegible]

Formula

`VAT = (Sales − Eligible Purchases) × Rate`

Mechanism

Each firm computes tax from its own income statement — no per-invoice reconciliation needed. The current CAT is essentially a subtractive method with a fixed 35% deemed subtraction (rather than actual purchases).

Pros

- Low administrative overhead
- Familiar mechanics for OR taxpayers
- Income-statement based — no invoice infrastructure
- Easier transition from current CAT

Cons

- No invoice trail → weaker enforcement
- Border adjustment harder to apply
- Evasion easier (no cross-firm matching)

Best for: incremental reform — minimal disruption, modest efficiency gain

B. Credit-invoice method (transaction-based)

Used in: EU, UK, [illegible] OECD

Formula

`VAT = (Sales × Rate) − (Input VAT credits)`

Mechanism

Tax appears on every invoice. Firms claim credit only with documented input invoices — creating a self-policing audit trail across the entire supply chain. Each transaction cross-checks the firm before and after it.

Pros

- Self-enforcing invoice trail
- Clean border adjustment for exports
- Higher compliance, lower evasion
- Transparent to taxpayers

Cons

- More administrative infrastructure
- Higher cost-to-compliance for small firms
- Requires invoice-matching IT capacity

Best for: structural reform — larger efficiency gain; requires investment in administration

2. Why moving from CAT to VAT raises efficiency — without changing revenue

1 Uniform effective rates

Industries with long supply chains stop paying more than vertically integrated firms. A retailer with many vendors pays the same effective rate as a single-firm conglomerate.

→ *Equal treatment of equal value*

2 Lower deadweight loss

No tax-induced incentive to integrate vertically just to escape pyramiding. Production decisions reflect economics, not tax structure.

→ *Higher real output, same revenue*

3 Border-adjustable

Credit-invoice VAT can be cleanly rebated on exports — fair treatment for Oregon's trade-exposed industries (timber, semi-conductors, agriculture).

→ *Exports leave OR untaxed by the state*

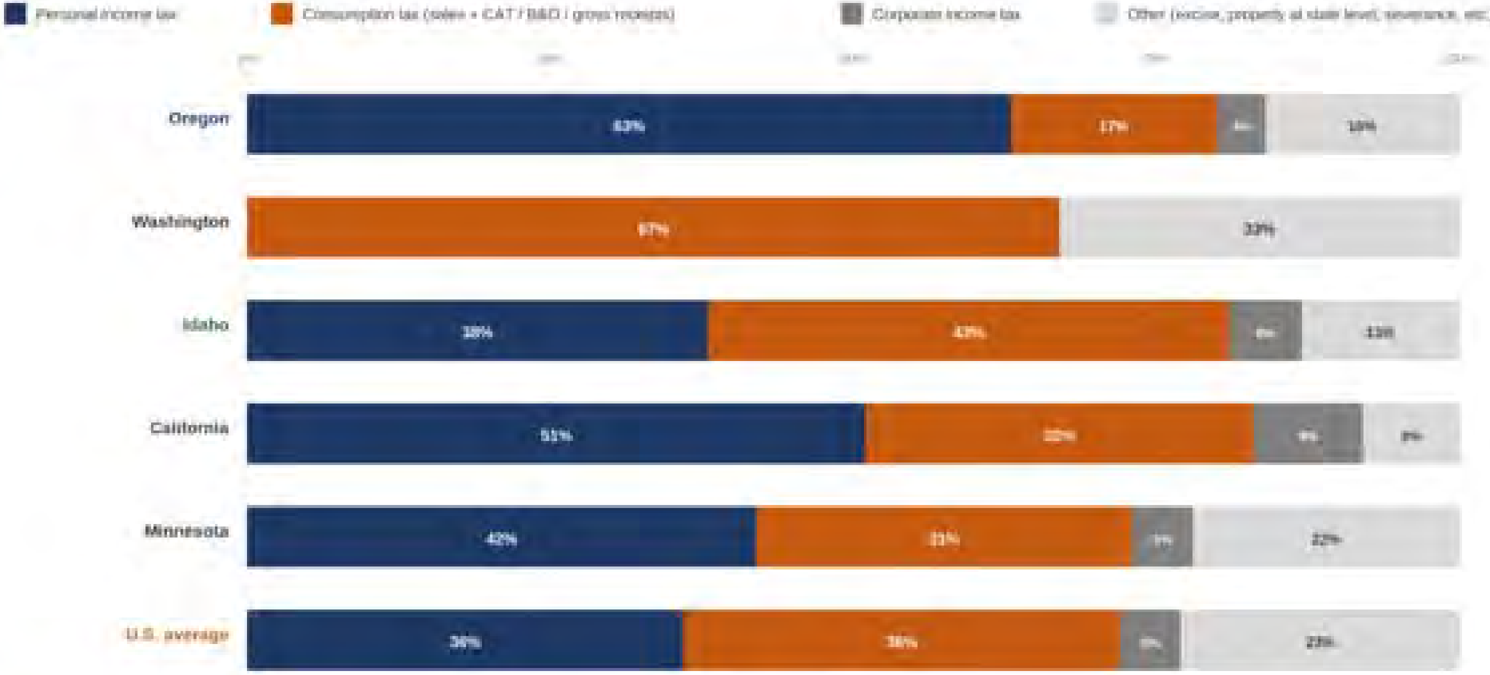
4 Self-policing audit trail

Credit-invoice VAT creates matched invoice records across firms. Buyers want credits; sellers must remit to provide them. Each transaction cross-checks the next.

→ *Higher compliance, lower evasion*

State revenue mix – Oregon is most personal income tax reliant

Share of state-only tax revenue by source. Oregon collects 63% from personal income tax, with no general sales tax; most states are closer to even.



Oregon's anomaly

63% of state revenue comes from PIT — vs. 36% national average. The combination of high PIT reliance + no sales tax makes Oregon an outlier among graduated PIT states.

Volatility consequence

High PIT reliance + capital-gains-driven top brackets means Oregon's revenue swings with the business cycle. The kicker is the visible symptom — sustained surpluses returned to filers.

Path to balance

A broader consumption tax — expanded CAT or new VAT — could shift Oregon's mix toward peer states without changing total revenue, reducing volatility and the size of kicker rebates.

How expanding the CAT to a consumption tax could rebalance revenue mix

What expansion is needed

Oregon today

Consumption tax revenue

$4.25B / year

Current CAT only (0.57% on activity > $1M, with the 35% subtraction)

Implied CAT-equivalent rate on consumption:

~0.4% effective

Match U.S. average (36% of revenue from consumption)

Consumption tax needed

$9.0B / year

Requires expanding CAT and/or adding a new VAT or sales tax — about +$4.75B

Implied broad-base VAT rate on consumption:

~3.0% on $300B consumption base

Section 4:

What is Good Growth? How does productivity benefit labor and compensation

ECOnorthwest

How does GDP growth benefit workers?

GDP Growth
Output per person

→

Productivity Gains
Output per worker hour

→

Labor Share
Workers' cut of GDP

→

Wage Level
Average compensation

→

Distributional effect to workers

How do you measure labor share of GDP?

Compensation

The headline measure used throughout this analysis

51.2%

Wages + salaries + employer supplements as % of nominal GDP.

The broadest measure. Includes benefits (health insurance, retirement), so it captures total labor cost to employers.

Wages & Salaries

42.2%

Payroll only (excludes employer-paid benefits)

The gap vs compensation reflects rising benefit costs since 1980. As benefits grew, take-home pay share fell even faster than compensation.

Source: BEA NIPA Tables 1.1.5 and 1.12;.

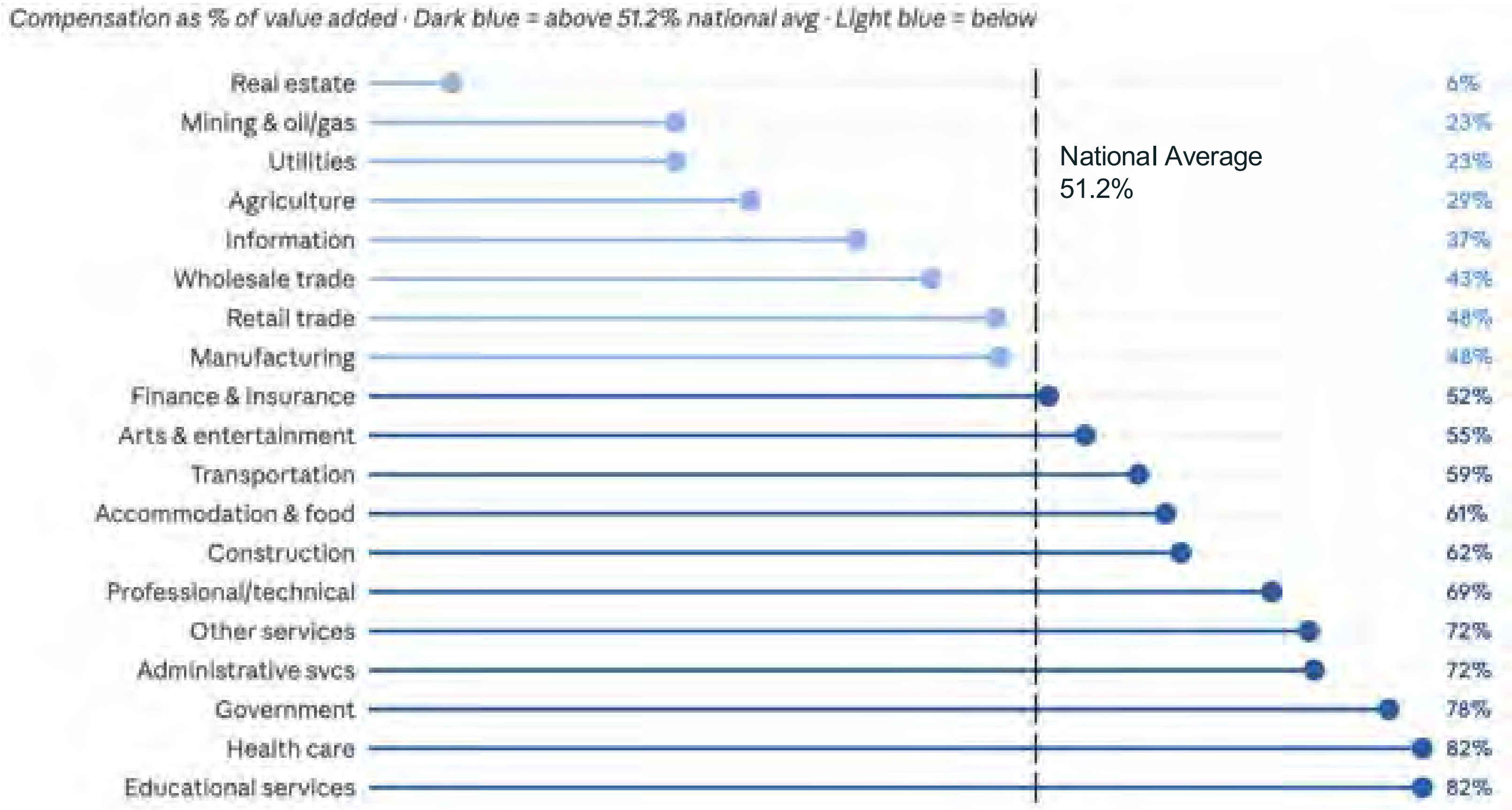
U.S. labor share of GDP has steadily declined since peak in 1970

U.S. labor share: 58.1% (1970 peak) → 51.2% (2025) — a 6.9% structural decline

Source: BEA NIPA Table 1.1.5 (GDP) and Table 1.12 (compensation, wages & salaries). Annual 1929–2025.

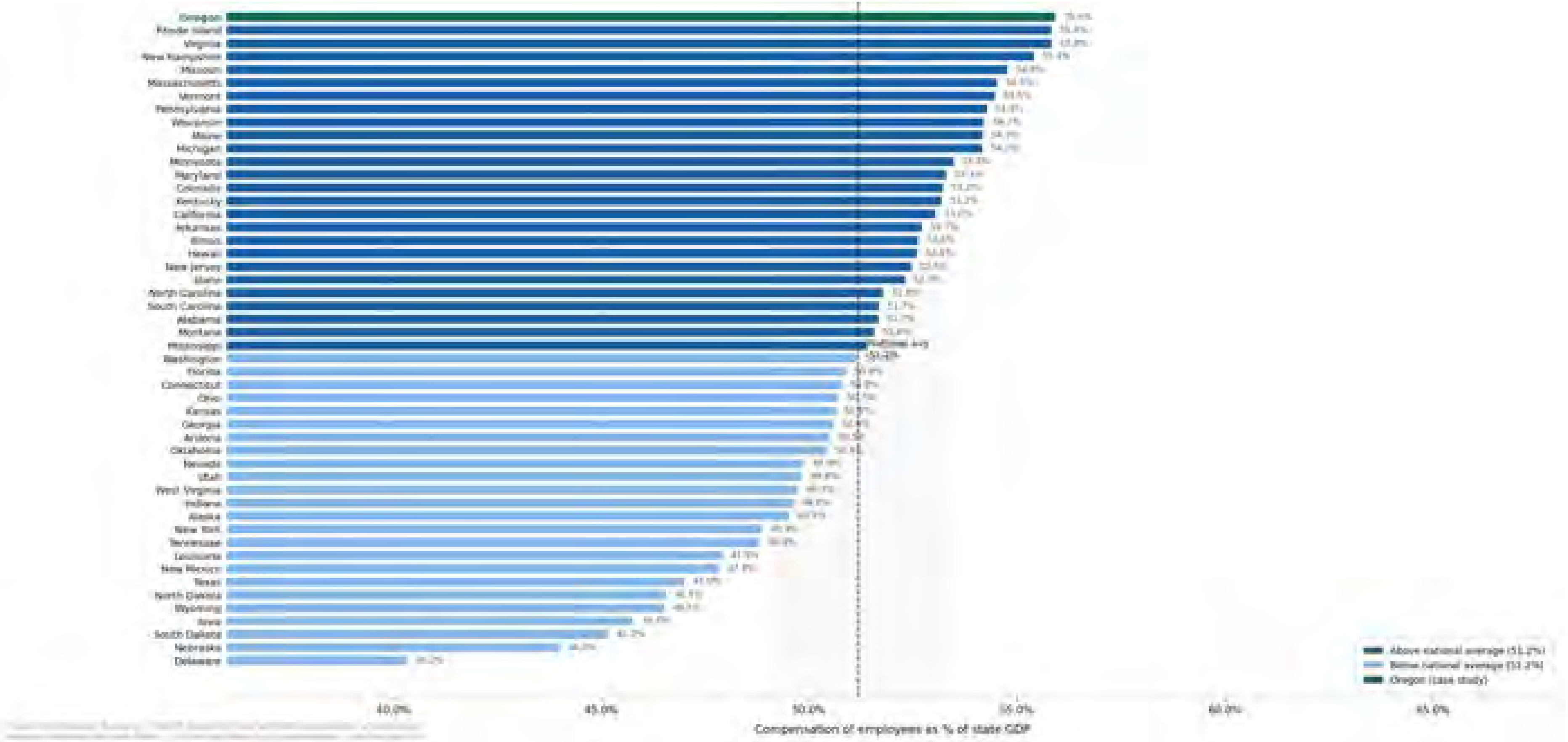
How much does labor share vary by industry nationally

National labor share by industry, 2021 to 2024 average

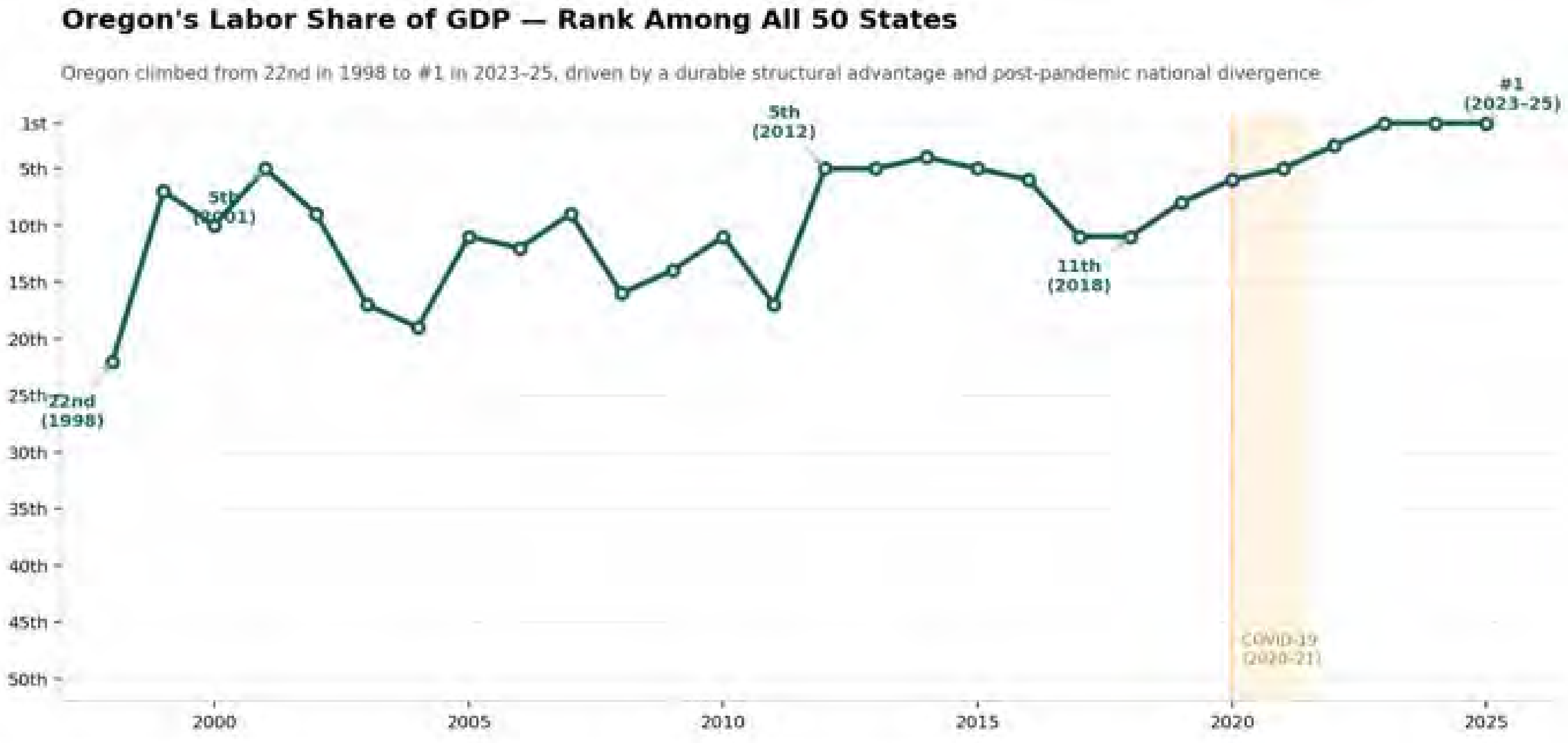


Oregon has the highest labor share of GDP

State Labor Share of GDP, 2025



Oregon's labor share rank has steadily increased since 2018



Two distinct mechanisms drive labor share change over time

STRUCTURAL

What changes: workers' share within each industry

Labor share fell inside industries (manufacturing, retail, information, and wholesale) all saw within-sector wage compression.

Example: U.S. manufacturing labor share fell 62% (1998) → 54% (2024). This is different than the industry contracting, it is workers inside it capturing a smaller share of GDP.

Mechanism: market power (monopsony, pricing), automation, offshoring, decline of collective bargaining.

COMPOSITION

What changes: the mix of industries

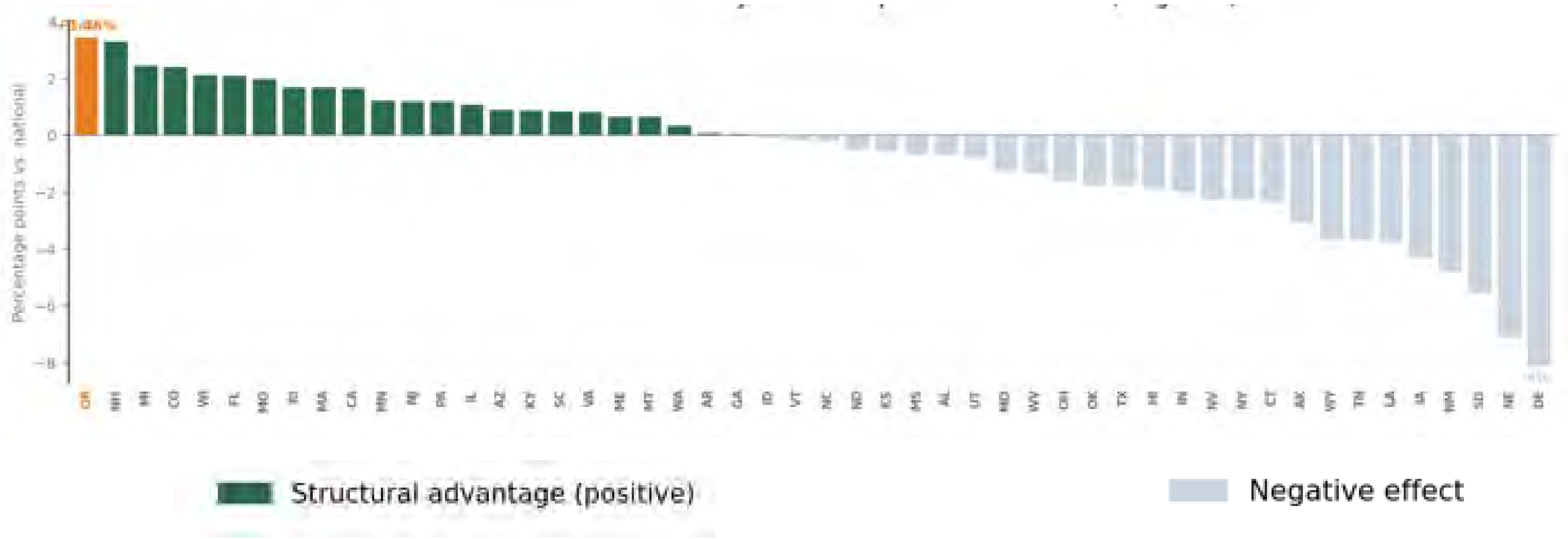
Industry GDP shares shift, some sectors grow faster than others. If low labor-share industries (finance, real estate) expand, the national average falls mechanically.

Example: Finance grew from 7.5% → 8.9% of GDP. Finance has a 28% labor share vs. 51% national average, so its growth dragged down the overall share.

Oregon has the largest structural effect, explaining the #1 labor share rank

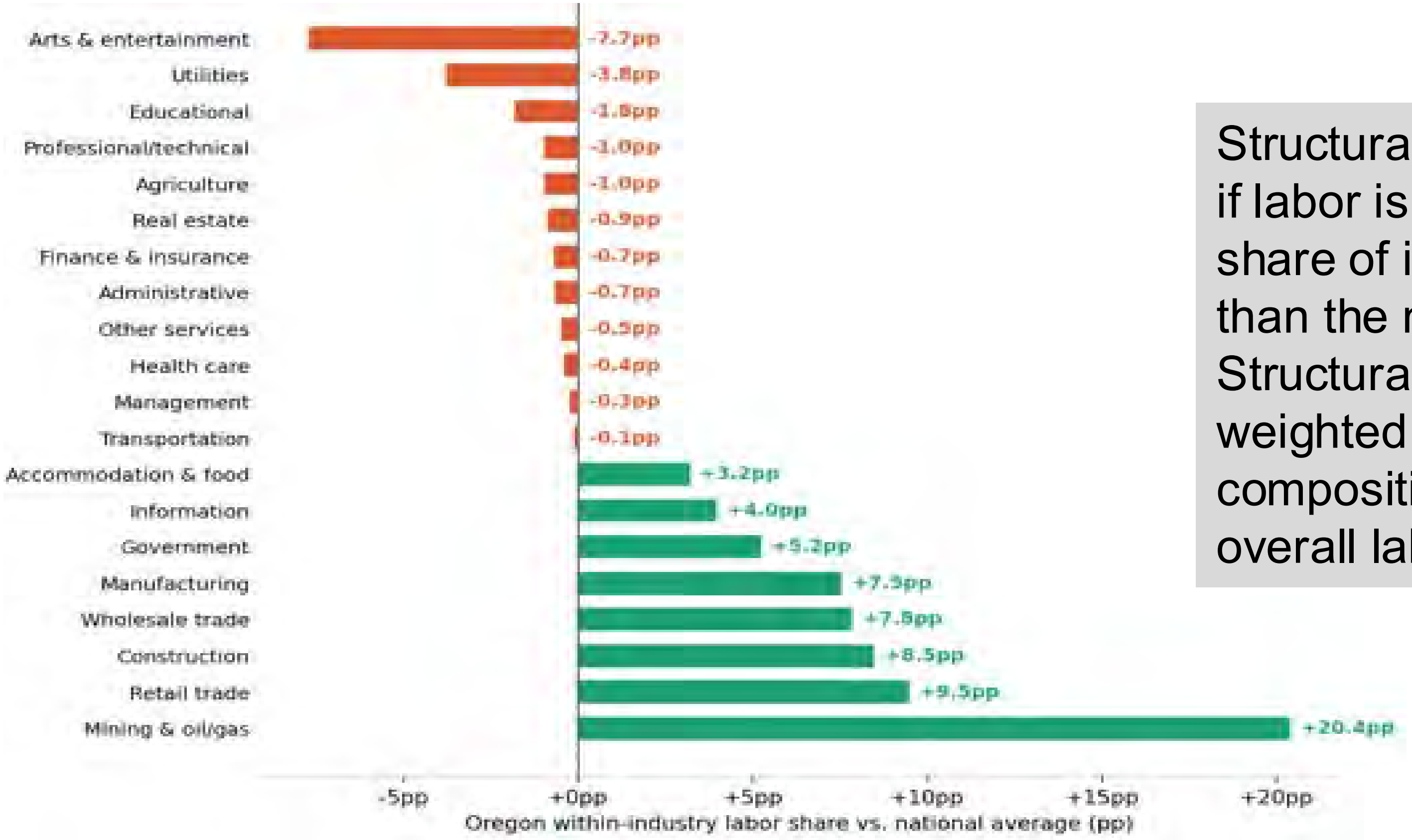
Across industries, labor has a higher share of productivity than any other state

Structural effect- within industry labor share compared to national average



Not every industry within Oregon earns a larger share compared to the U.S. average

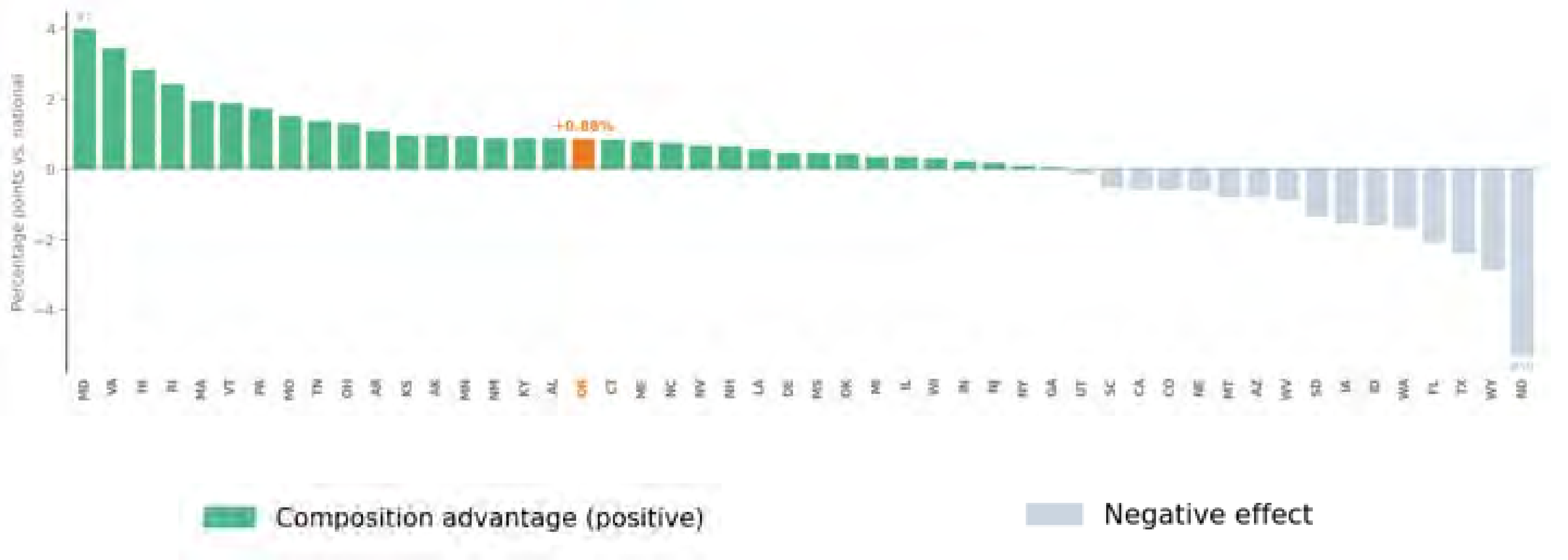
Oregon within-industry structural residuals compared to U.S. average



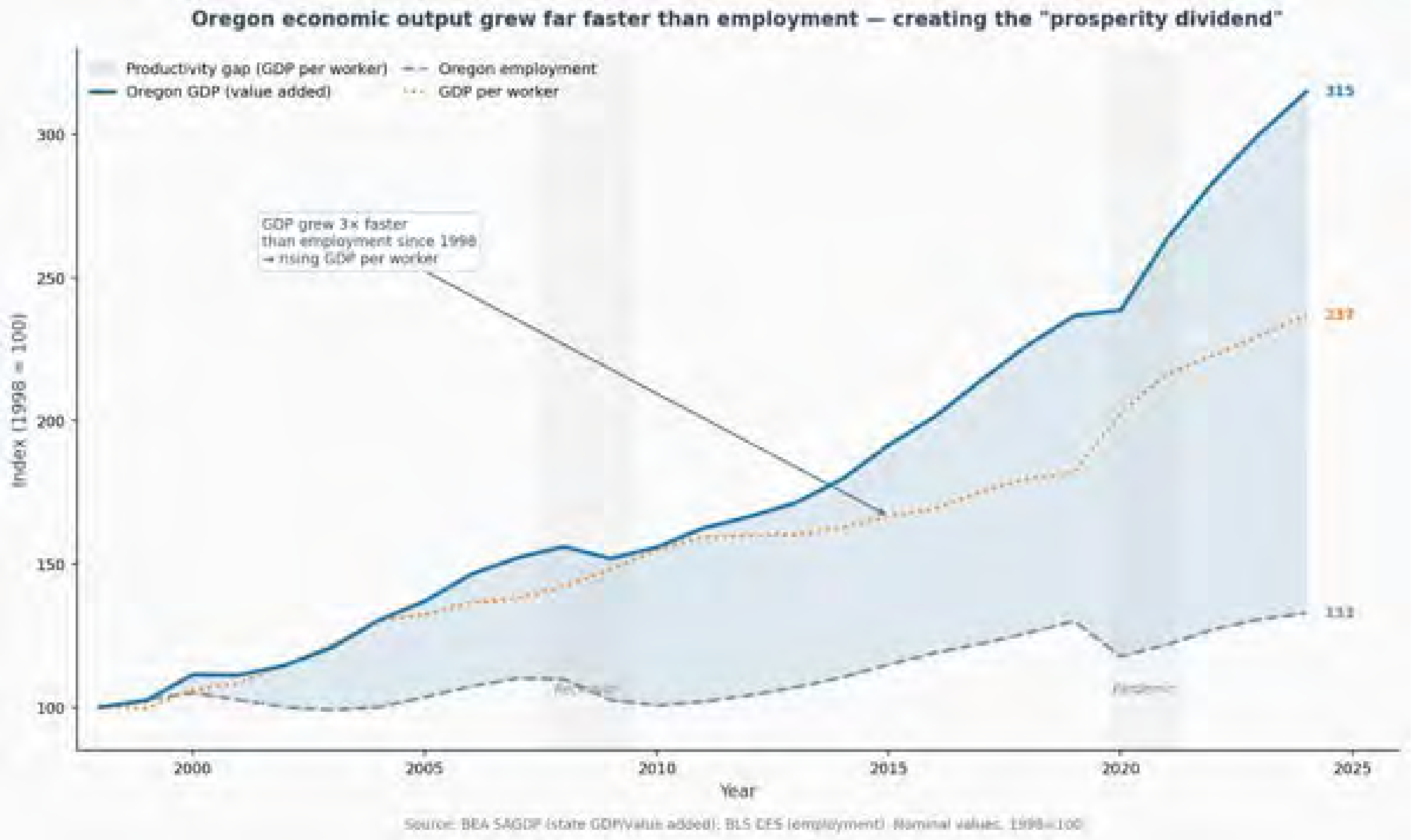
Structural residuals indicate if labor is a larger or smaller share of industry value add than the national average. Structural residuals weighted by industry composition determines overall labor share

Industry mix in Oregon also contributes to a higher labor share than U.S. average

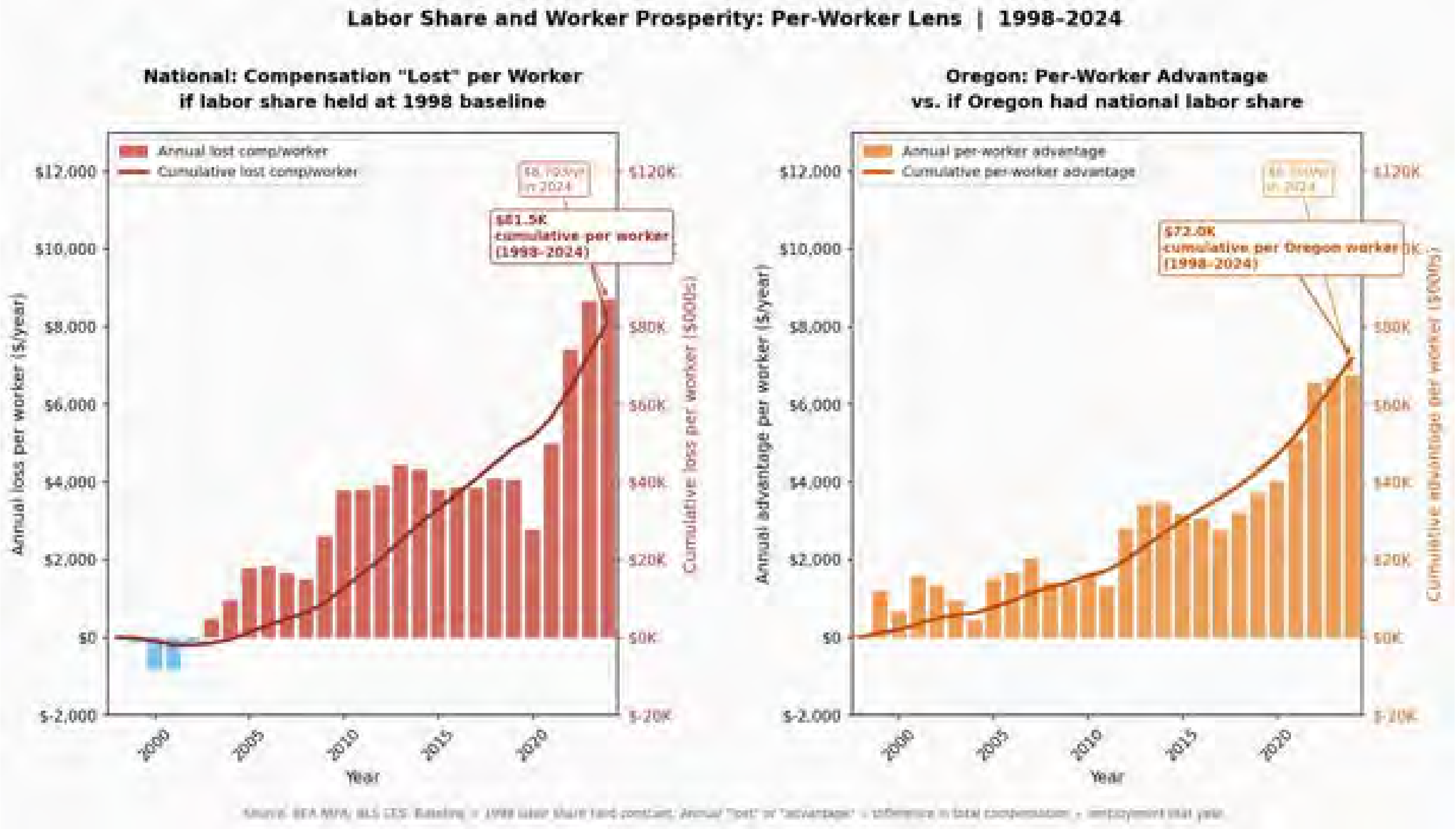
Composition effect- industry mix contribution compared to national average



How does a growing GDP benefit workers?



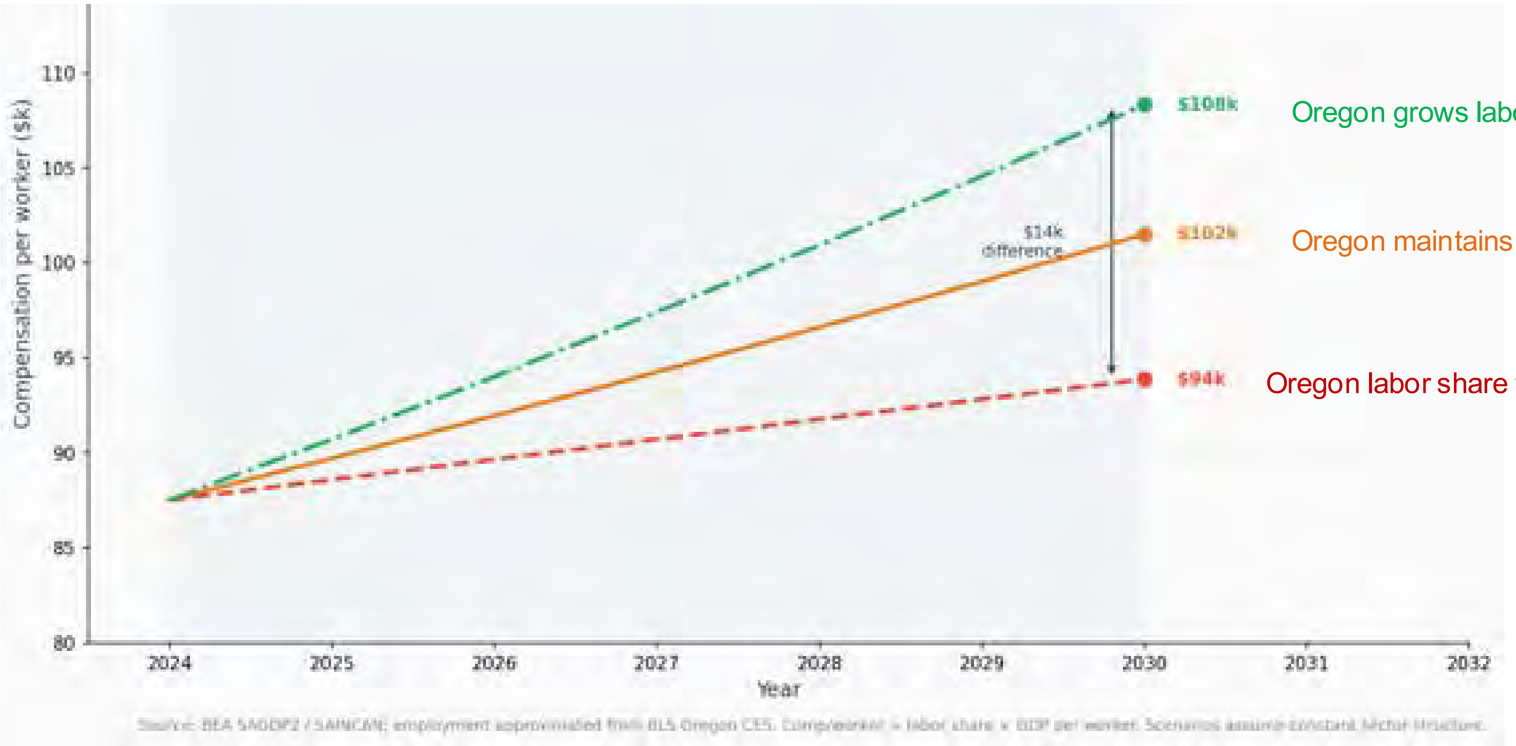
Labor share trend in Oregon increased comp $6,700 per worker since 1998



Future possibilities in a low employment/high productivity growth economy

Scenario analysis where GDP grows faster (2.5% annually) than jobs (0.5% annually) through 2030

Average compensation per worker in Oregon



Oregon grows labor share to 60%

Oregon maintains labor share

Oregon labor share falls to national average