



2019

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

PREPARED BY

**THE BEND
CHAMBER OF
COMMERCE**

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BEND *Chamber*



Central Oregon's Businesses Contribute Significantly to the State's Jobs & Revenue

Bend and Central Oregon host one of the most successful business and revenue producers in the state. Primarily made of small businesses, we generate far more job growth per capita than any other region. The 2019 legislature can support this success story, but also has the potential to greatly damage the very business community that is making Central Oregon an economic engine to the state.

BEND Chamber

Representing over 1,200 businesses with more than 25,000 employees, the Bend Chamber helps protect the innovative and collaborative business environment that we now enjoy. By providing connections, advocacy, resources, and leadership development, the Bend Chamber is the steward of the business community's continued successful trajectory.

BEND'S CONTINUED #1 RANKING

“Bend continues to provide the ingredients that not only attracts new investment and businesses, but thinks beyond the first year with an ecosystem that supports growth, job generation and livability,” said Katy Brooks, Bend Chamber of Commerce CEO. “The level of sophistication and support within Bend far outweighs our market size and is due to the efforts of organizations that support the full life cycle of business and workforce development.”

For the second year in a row the Bend-Redmond metro area was listed as the Best Performing Small City in the US by the Milken Institute’s annual ranking of municipalities and metro areas.

In justifying Bend’s continued #1 ranking, the full report notes:

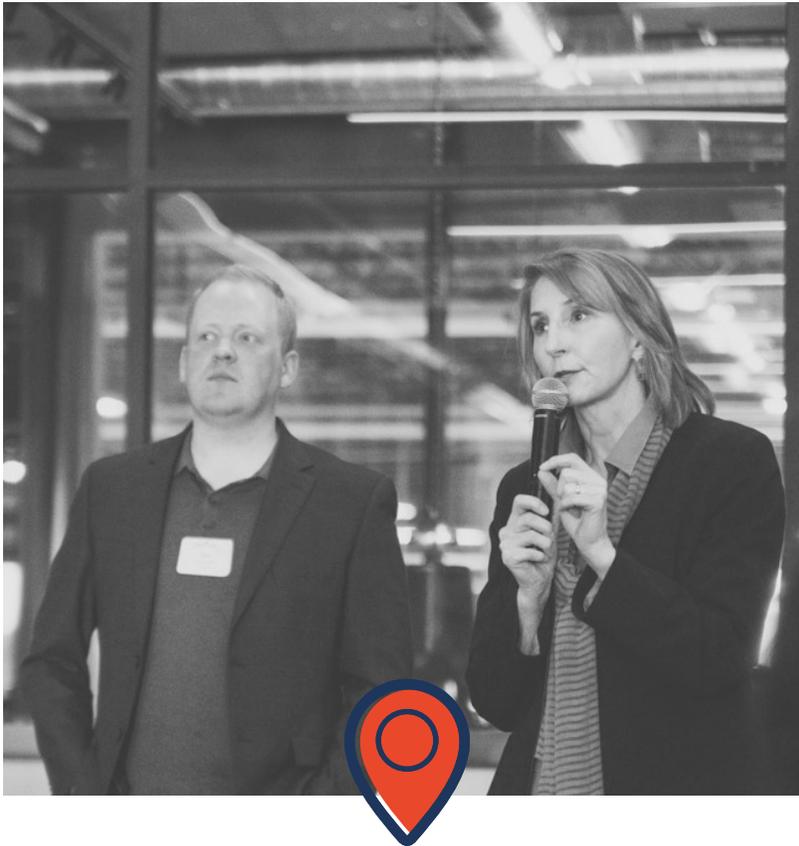
The Bend-Redmond, OR, area remains the top performing small region, held aloft by the second highest job growth among its peers for both 2016 and the five-year period 2011-2016. The region has a high quality of life and easy access to outdoor recreation, drawing in tourists and new residents alike. Demand from these new residents has been contributing to higher housing prices, and the precipitous fall in values experienced during the recession has been more than made up. The presence of the Oregon State University-Cascades campus is helping to create a skilled local workforce, valuable to the diverse local high-tech industry. The collaborative business community tries to foster an entrepreneurial environment and has developed solid support structures for new firms and startups in pursuit of broad-based growth.



Selected Central Oregon Traded-Sector Industries

INDUSTRY CLUSTER	COMPANIES	JOB	YOY JOB GROWTH
Aviation/Aerospace	83	1,342	17.4%
Bioscience	32	1,084	19.4%
Brewing & Distilling	28	1,415	17.1%
Building Products	67	2,836	(2.6%)
Specialty Food Products	79	506	18.0%
High Technology	121	2,076	26.5%
Outdoor Gear & Apparel	96	640	6.0%

Source: EDCO's 2016 Traded-Sector Directory; EDCO CRM (Executive Pulse); Oregon Employment Department



Addressing the State's Looming Deficit While Keeping Business & Schools Healthy

As avid supporters of education, we understand the need to fund schools and higher education. To do this we must have a comprehensive approach to reducing \$26 Billion + deficit of PERS, while ensuring our schools, our children and our future workforce are strong.

As a region made mostly of small companies we are more susceptible to the impacts of increased taxes and regulation. The abundance of revenue bills in the 2019 legislative session has the potential to cripple business and drive them out of Oregon.

The volume and scope of new revenue fees, taxes and regulation can have unintended consequences to businesses and employers, including:

- Fewer hires
- Stifled growth
- Decreased support for local bonds and funding
- Closed businesses
- Relocation of businesses to other states
- Disincentives to growing business

Here are just a few of the revenue generation proposals that will impact Central Oregon's small businesses:

- Health care tax
- Cap and Trade legislation
- Commercial Activity Tax (CAT)
- Business Activity Tax (BAT)
- Insurance and other payroll taxes
- Mandatory paid family leave
- Value-Add Tax
- Gross Receipts Tax
- OregonSaves penalties
- Other employer-paid tax/fees

Legislation Supporting Central Oregon's Small Business Growth



- Add Housing Inventory
- Fund OSU-Cascades Student Success Center & Expansion
- Fund Central Oregon Community College Redmond Expansion
- Fund Innovation Districts
- Fund Workforce Training/Internships
- Add New, High-Quality Child Care Facilities/Providers

HOUSING



We have a critical need for mid-range housing options in order to recruit, retain, and grow local businesses and a stable workforce. Our housing crisis has severe projected affects if we don't act now to create full spectrum housing options in the Bend area and Central Oregon region markets.

- **Support Redmond in the affordable housing pilot program**
- **Support ADU's in rural Oregon**
- **Support the sale of DSL properties within UGB's to increase housing, including the Stevens Road property in Bend**

OSU-CASCADES



The Cascades campus is the catalyst for smart, inclusive and transformative growth in Central Oregon. It enjoys the support of the region and all 7 of Central Oregon's chambers of commerce.

- **Fund an additional \$12 million to develop the OSU-Cascades Student Success Center (to add to the \$5 million match already supported and funded by students)**
- **Fund \$17 million in essential infrastructure to enable expansion of OSU-C**
- **Pass brownfield legislation to assist in reclamation of land for the development of OSU-C**

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Supporting the voice of business in Bend since 1926. Working with the city, county and state as well as our other local districts and agencies, can be a time-consuming challenge, especially for business owners who are often “busy working his or her business.” Thus, the Bend Chamber Advocacy Council was formed with a group of 10 diverse leaders to help manage all of our efforts and serve as representation of the membership.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT



Central Oregon is in a workforce crisis that increases each year. Several efforts by multiple organizations are underway to address the current and future shortage, but need support from the state.

- **Fund development of a regional internship placement through Better Together, East Cascades Works & Youth Career Connect**
- **Fund Apprentice programs to increase technology apprenticeships in Central Oregon and the Technology Association of Oregon’s Apprenti program**

CHILD CARE



Our region is growing rapidly, but child care providers are not, resulting in the designation of a “child care desert.” A third of our areas infants and toddlers do not have care—impacting families, the workforce and equity.

- **Support bills to increase the number of quality child care openings**
- **Work with the Governor’s budget/emphasis on resolving roadblocks to affordable, accessible, high-quality child care in Central Oregon/Bend**

SUPPORT

SUPPORT BILLS AIMED AT INCREASING AVAILABILITY OF QUALITY CHILD CARE
SUPPORT FUNDING OSU-CASCADES INNOVATION DISTRICT

HB 2336 REMOVE POPULATION REQUIREMENT IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING
PILOT PROJECT TO ALLOW REDMOND ELIGIBILITY

HB 2239 SUPPORT ADDITIONAL JUDGE & STAFF IN DESCHUTES COUNTY

SB 88 ALLOW ADUs ON RURAL LANDS

HB 3242 ALLOW SALE OF DSL PROPERTIES

HB 3251 OUTDOOR PRODUCT ACCELERATOR FUND

HB 2001 HOUSING BILL

OPPOSE

HB 2498 RESTRICTING INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

HB 3031, 2005 PAID FAMILY LEAVE

HB 2269 HEALTH CARE TAX

GOVERNOR'S PROPOSAL TO REDUCE PERS WITH SAIF SURPLUS

CONSIDER *Cumulative impacts of new business revenue legislation*

Businesses are concerned with the cumulative impacts of new revenue legislation and fees that increase the cost of doing business in Oregon. New taxes, fees and regulatory requirements will add to overhead costs and create an overall impact that will force many businesses to close, reduce employees, reduce growth or leave the state.

In particular, we ask for the avoidance of cumulative taxes to business and the consumer in the following legislation:

HB 2020 CAP AND TRADE LEGISLATION

NEW REVENUE CAT, BAT, GRT OR OTHER REVENUE LEGISLATION

WORKPLACE REGULATIONS CAUSING EXTREME BURDEN ON BUSINESS

Although we agree in concept with the following legislation, the legal and administrative burden has significant impact to the feasibility of implementation.

SB 729, 726 WORKPLACE HARASSMENT

HB 3031, 2005, 3385 PAID FAMILY LEAVE