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RoseburgChamber.com

April 28, 2025

Dear Chair Grayber and Members of the House Committee
on Labor and Workplace Standards,

On behalf of the Roseburg Area Chamber of Commerce, and the businesses, organizations and individuals we represent throughout Roseburg and Douglas County, we urge you to oppose SB 916. The Roseburg Area Chamber is ardently opposed to SB 916 as the bill flagrantly disregards the purpose and principles of Oregon's unemployment insurance benefit system and creates an unfair financial burden on public and private-sector employers of all sizes.

The primary purpose of unemployment insurance is to provide temporary financial support to workers who become involuntarily unemployed through no fault of their own, such as layoffs. Providing unemployment benefits to individuals who are voluntarily not working due to their involvement in a labor dispute is the antithesis of the intent of the UI system.

Additionally, providing benefits to striking workers could adversely impact fair labor negotiations, forcing employers into financial concessions they may not be able to sustain, ultimately harming both employers and employees. If passed, the tenets of SB 916 would disrupt the delicate balance imperative to a fair collective bargaining process.

Oregon's UI system is funded solely by employers through payroll taxes. Expanding UI benefits to striking workers would require employers to subsidize labor disputes in which they may have no involvement. This additional tax burden would, without question, adversely impact small and medium-sized businesses. Public employers, many of which are already facing budget shortfalls would, in all likelihood, only be able to manage the financial strain by cutting staff and/or reducing services, all to the detriment of the public they are intended to serve.

The Roseburg Area Chamber supports fair labor practices and workers' rights. However, SB 916 introduces policies that would significantly impede Oregon's economic stability, burden all Oregon employers, create unfair labor practices and result in unintended consequences harmful to Oregon employees and citizens.

We respectfully request you protect Oregon's UI trust fund, safeguard Oregon workers and employers and uphold the integrity of Oregon's UI system by opposing SB 916. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

ROSEBURG AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
DOUGLAS COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Debra L. Fromdahl".

Debra L. Fromdahl, IOM
President & CEO



To advocate for and be the voice of the business community in the greater Roseburg area.

To strengthen, enhance and protect our members through political advocacy, economical development, community promotion and member programs and services.