

Submitter: Benjamin Barber

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Semiconductors

Measure: SB4

The problem that I have with this bill, is that it awards discretionary power to the governor, rather than implement a nondiscretionary mandate, as long as certain the required conditions are met. This will reduce the chance that the discretionary power will be abused, provide objective and predictable outcomes for the effected businesses. The grant of discretionary power also allows opportunity for bribery or quid pro quo arrangements in exchange for the discretionary decision making power.

This sort of Quid Pro Quo was already an issue during the John Kitzhaber administration, whereby the governor appointed Renee James the Oregon University System Board, during the 30 year tax exemption bill. During that process the state arranged that intel would receive tax breaks as long as 10 percent of the amount, was donated to charities, which were overwhelmingly politically motivated charities such as the Rainbow Push Coalition and the Feminist Majority Foundation, among others who donate to the democratic party and causes.

This appearance of impropriety, was what led me to provide evidence to the US attorney's office in that Kitzhaber investigation, and unsurprisingly 48 hours later Renee James resigned from Intel Corporation, however not before the evidence that was being sought was destroyed, and subsequently the FBI alleged that Ellen Rosenblum's office was using confidential information, to leak the investigation to targets of their enforcement action. Subsequently Intel Corp was sued and recently settled, allegations that it engaged in so called "reverse discrimination", driven in part by these political arrangements.

My concern is that something similar will take place, and this bill will be an avenue to allow similar quid pro quo arrangements, and once again Oregon will be perceived as a corrupt backwater of America, in addition to an unpredictable business environment at the whims of discretionary power.