

**374** businesses **busted through barriers**  
in 2016 with our assistance



**4,438**

**Contacts  
by Telephone**

That's about 18 calls per day!



**41**

**State Agencies,  
Boards and Commissions**

helped by answering questions, streamlining  
processes, and making policy changes to  
better respond to small businesses.

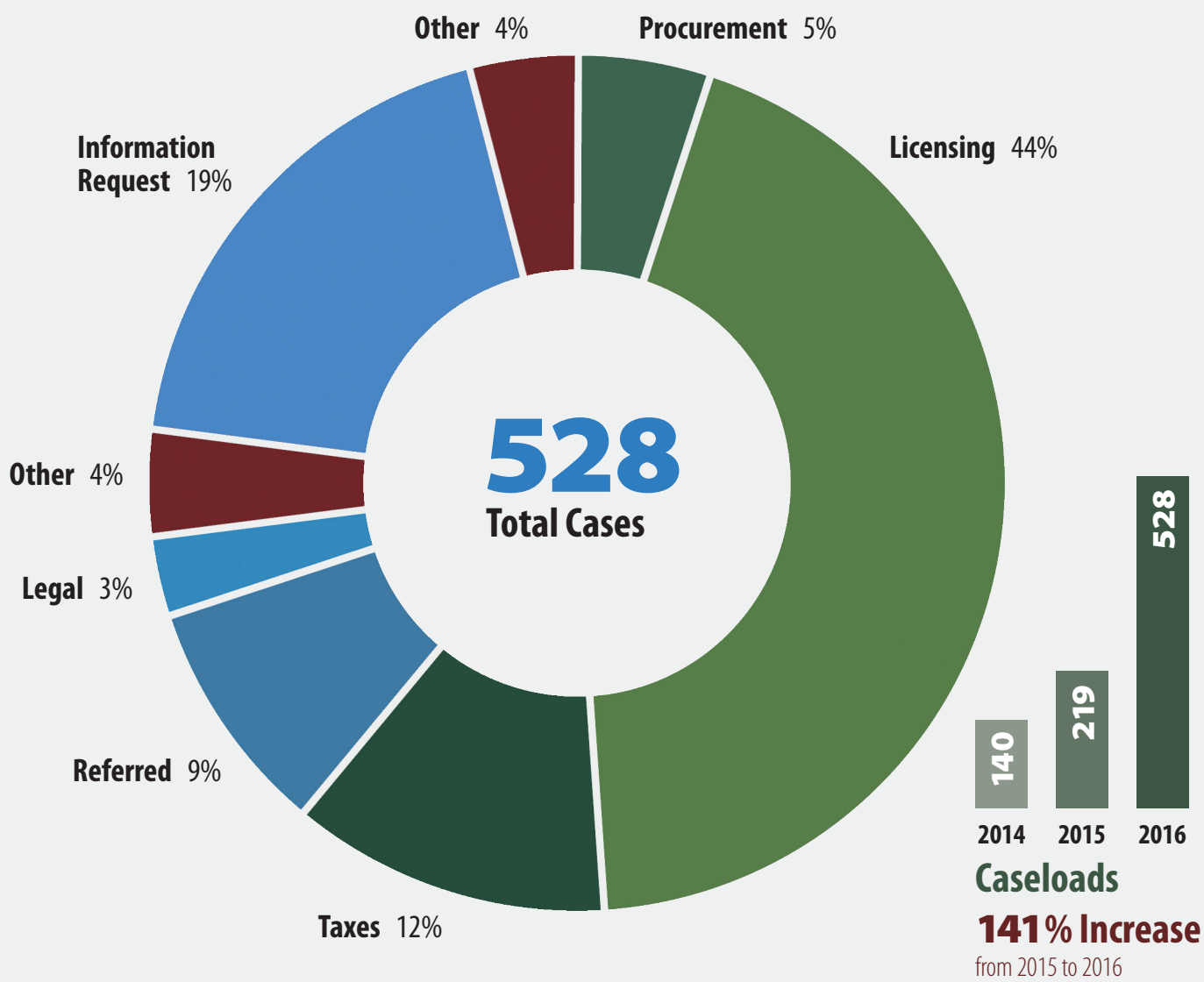


**65%**

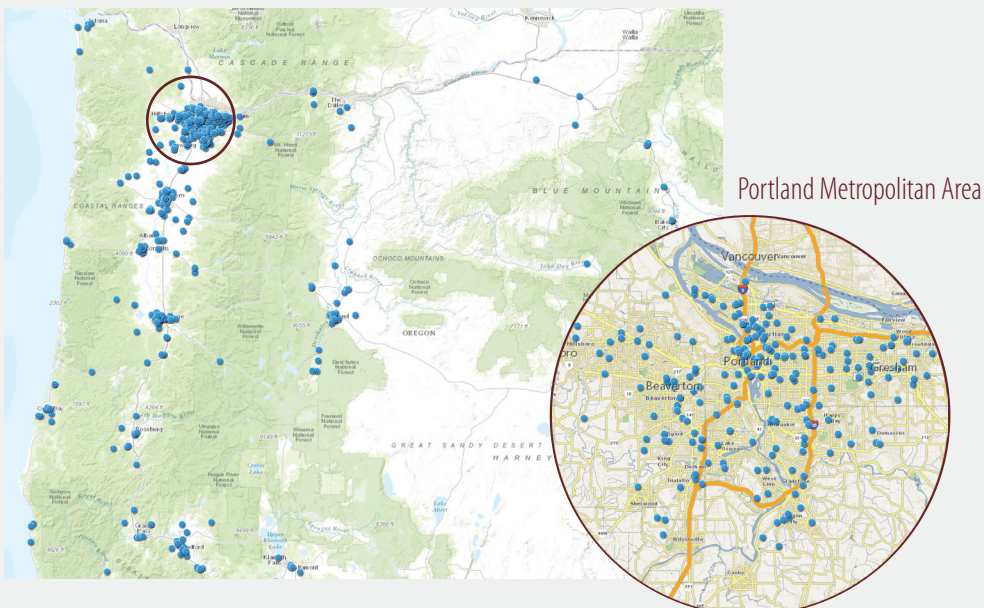
**Business Owners  
and Nonprofit Organizations**

got their complaints and questions  
addressed within the same day; an  
additional 15% were handled within 3 days.

## 2016 Cases by Issue



## 2016 Small Business Cases by Location



## 2016 Challenges



**231** cases

**Licensing**

**175% Increase**

from 2015 to 2016

48

2014

84

2015

231

2016



**64** cases

**Taxes**

**121% Increase**

from 2015 to 2016

16

2014

29

2015

64

2016



**28** cases

**Procurement**

**65% Increase**

from 2015 to 2016

7

2014

17

2015

28

2016

We helped  
**154**

entrepreneurs start and grow  
their Oregon small business



We helped  
**374**

established businesses bust through  
barriers, sustain and thrive

We worked with **23** cities, **11** counties and **1** regional government  
to help get answers to business questions



We referred entrepreneurs to **20** Small Business Development Centers



**22** business organizations partnered with us to provide capital and other technical assistance



**105** chambers of commerce helped us get the word out

## Looking Ahead

**Small businesses are critical to Oregon's economy.** More than half our workforce is employed in jobs created by small businesses. Nonprofit organizations continue to employ more than 12 percent of Oregonians. Urban or rural, for-profit or not, every time an entrepreneur contacts the Office of Small Business Assistance, they are offering state and local government opportunities to improve.

**In 2016, the office heard from small business start-ups for the first time.** The majority of inquiries focused on a combination of basic business questions and licensing at state and local levels. State agencies and cities that have clear and understandable information for start-ups on their websites tend to generate fewer inquiries and requests for assistance.

**Licensing issues were the top concern of existing businesses.** We see this as an opportunity.

**When entrepreneurs have positive connections with government, compliance is made easier.**

We recommend government agencies proactively reach out to their small business partners as much as possible within resource limitations. Low- or no-cost opportunities to engage entrepreneurs include involving them in agency rulemaking, form and website design.

## About the Office

The **Office of Small Business Assistance** is part of the **Oregon Secretary of State**, and serves as an independent voice for small business within government. The office was established in 2013 and expanded in 2016. The Advocate and staff help entrepreneurs get their questions and concerns addressed and facilitate communication between business and government.



## About the Advocate

With 18 years of experience running small businesses to add to her nine years of service in the Legislative branch, **Ruth Miles** understands first-hand the challenges entrepreneurs face. She's crisscrossed Oregon over the past three years to visit with business leaders and associations, chambers of commerce and community partners to hear their concerns about getting caught in red tape. And everywhere she goes, she runs with scissors.

## About the Help Button

When you need help, you need it right away. That's why you'll see **this button** on state agency websites. Click and tell us who you are, your question or concern and how to get in touch with you. That's our cue to get to work.



### Policy

"We learned that a product in our store had outdated, noncompliant packaging. The Advocate helped us get a clear answer on how to legally sell our current inventory until the manufacturer redesigned their packaging."

— *Sopon*



### Procurement

"Thank you so much for all your efforts with this and especially for keeping us up to speed on the process! I think that was one of the most frustrating aspects, at least from our point of view, was just not knowing where things stood."

— *Dave*



### Taxes

"It's amazing that you got them to understand the tax situation. I'm so happy I could almost do cartwheels!"

— *Randy*