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Date: February 1, 2012
To: House Committee on Higher Education
From: Jeanette Mladenovic, M.D. M.B.A., M.A.C.P.
Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs

RE: HB 4056

Dear Members of the House Committee on Higher Education,

As Oregon's only public educator of dentists, nurses, physicians and physician assistants, OHSU is extremely dependent on students that have a strong foundation in the STEM fields. OHSU's \$358 million research enterprise (FY11) is also critically dependent on the graduate students who enter our Ph.D. programs (currently 277 enrolled) and the research staff (~1,400 employed) who support the scientific activities of our students and Faculty. The OHSU Hospital and Clinics would not be able to deliver the same volume of quality care (~700,000 ambulatory visits and ~59,000 hospital patients) in its Hospitals and Clinics without a workforce (almost 6,600) comfortable in the use and adoption of technology in the workplace.

Therefore, OHSU's future success is inexorably linked to an Oregon population that is well-educated in the STEM fields. In recognition of this, OHSU has long history of investing in the STEM pipeline by engaging K-12 students and providing teacher education across the State through the activities of our Office of Science Education Opportunities, Center for Diversity and Multicultural Affairs and Area Health Education Center.

Also, as part of the recently announced Strategic Alliance between OHSU and PSU, the two institutions committed to coordinate our K-12 science education outreach programs to expand the pipeline of students who are prepared to pursue careers in health care and health sciences. We also agreed to place a special emphasis on outreach to under-represented minorities and children in under-served communities. The subsequent conversations that arose out of this commitment resulted in the formation of the Portland Metro STEM Partnership of which we are both founding members.

OHSU is extremely supportive of the interest the Legislature is exhibiting in STEM education. However, the proposed composition of the Task Force on STEM Access and Success omits representation from the healthcare and life science education sector that is critically dependent on a strong STEM pipeline and that Oregon is dependent on for the future health and well-being of its citizens. We would therefore respectfully ask that you consider adding an OHSU representative to the Task Force on STEM Access and Success.

Please feel free to contact me if you have comments or questions arising from this memo.