

Testimony to the Oregon Legislature
Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education
Oregon Community College Funding

Presented by
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This testimony is in support of the budget requests from Oregon's community colleges.

Kendall Energy Consulting, LLC is a small business providing commercial and industrial energy efficiency and combined heat and power policy, project facilitation and finance. Our work takes us to exotic places like British Columbia, Russia, China, Riddle, Halsey, and John Day to name a few. Our clients range from family owned wood products firms, to multinational pulp and paper concerns, to the NW Power and Conservation Council, to the Oregon Global Warming Commission and others.

I am a product of the Oregon Community College system, more specifically the Lane Community College Energy Management Program. Founded in the early 80's, this technical associates degree program provided the knowledge, skill and experience necessary for me to advance my career, prepare for completion of Baccalaureate and graduate degrees and to have a 33 year long career in energy management.

In that time, I've worked in residential, commercial, industrial energy efficiency and renewable resource roles in public utilities, state government, in the private sector and on numerous industry and non-profit boards. I have developed programs, implemented, evaluated and made policy. I could not have been prepared without the the affordable

Later in my career, I served with more than a half a dozen business and industry experts for three years on the LCC Energy Management Curriculum Advisory Committee. Market needs responsive design of community college programs is one of the things that make Oregon Community college graduates sought after. Hundreds of graduates from this one LCC program serve in energy management consultancies, utilities, government, public sector and commercial energy managers across the country. This is the longest standing energy management technician program in the country. We should be proud of it and we should

support it. This is the infrastructure and the underpinnings of Oregon's green economy, It's one of the reasons we are known for our progress in this field.

I have hired graduates from the program as interns and contractors, and supervised work-study for a large group of LCC Energy Management students. They come to the market prepared to make meaningful contributions. Oregon's energy efficiency and renewable resource markets continue to grow and has managed to prevail in rather variable economic conditions.

I know that the Lane Community College Energy Management Program is just one of the many, many paths to developing technical expertise provided by our community colleges. Nurse assistants, real estate, surveying, radiology, paralegal certifications and associates degrees are recognized by the private and public sector as valid, reliable and essential.

As a founding board member of the Columbia Willamette and Rogue Valley Clean Cities Coalitions board member of the Association of Professional Energy Managers local and national boards, I have an opportunity to understand the needs and potential in the market for the skilled graduates of community college programs. Specific to the regional marketplace, as a past Treasurer and Chair of the NW Energy Efficiency Alliance Board from 2001 to 2006, I worked with utility, government and the private sector that seek out and hire Oregon graduates of energy management technical programs.

The community colleges are asking for \$510 million for the Community College Support Fund. They were funded at \$500 million in 2007-2009. This budget has been cut to \$395 million since then! At the same time, our enrollment has increased 40%. Budget proposals would fund community colleges at \$428 million. This level would lead to layoffs and significant tuition increases (10-20%) at most colleges, including Lane. A budget of \$450 million will likely just keep us treading water.

The Governor's Ten Year Energy Action Plan and this legislatures ambitious efficiency, renewable resource and sustainability goals call for technical skills of all sorts. We need to grow our technician workforce in Oregon. Community Colleges provide business recognized expertise. At a time when we are saddling our youth with the highest college debt ever in history, isn't it time we stepped up support the next generation in the best way possible. Let's give them an affordable education that they can build on, that will provide them the skills for living wage employment and something no one can take away.