Eugene City Manager's Office

April 10, 2013

To: Senator Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair
Representative Bob Jensen, Co-Chair
Members of the Joint Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
From: Jon Ruiz, Eugene City Manager
RE: House Bill 5028

The City of Eugene strongly endorses the inclusion of $7.5 million for the Oregon Regional Accelerator and Innovation Network (RAIN) in the Business Oregon's budget—HB 5028. The RAIN initiative aligns perfectly with the goals and strategies outlined in our Regional Prosperity Economic Development Plan. The Regional Prosperity Plan, developed jointly by the cities of Eugene and Springfield together with Lane County, unifies the region around a common set of economic goals and strategies. One of our main strategies, "Take Action to Energize the Creative Economy," identifies the establishment of "innovation incubators" as the priority next step. Oregon RAIN's proposed business incubation facilities are crucial to furthering our region's economic development strategy.

A key strategy of the Regional Plan is to expand partnerships between the region and the university system. Oregon RAIN strengthens the quality of connection between regional communities, businesses, the universities, and the Signature Research Centers. The "Partnership for Innovation and Competitiveness" proposed by Oregon's research universities and Oregon-based companies will establish our state and our region as a leading place for entrepreneurs to succeed and grow. It will solidify and enhance our reputation as an international hub of advanced innovation—this bill will attract and leverage investment to economically benefit our communities, region, and state.

City of Eugene Partnership with Oregon RAIN initiative builds on the City's experience supporting research and innovative technology-based businesses. The City of Eugene's Business Development Loans have supported University of Oregon technology spin-offs, from Electro-Geodesics to Avant Assessment, employing scores of high-paying professionals in our region. The partnership between the communities and the university system will improve our networks, upgrade our innovation infrastructure, and increase regional competitiveness in high-tech business development.

I endorse the Oregon University System's proposal for the Business Oregon budget.

Sincerely,

Jon Ruiz

City Manager

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