



February 4, 2015

Senator Richard Devlin, Co-Chair
 Representative Peter Buckley, Co-Chair
 Joint Committee on Ways and Means
 H-178, State Capitol
 Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Senator Devlin and Representative Buckley:

As you know, the Oregon State University Statewide Public Service Programs – the Agricultural Experiment Station, Extension Service, and Forest Research Laboratory – provide state-of-the-art research and outreach in all 36 counties in Oregon. The expertise and advice generated by scientists and extension agents help solve such real-world problems as pollinator health, water quality in onion crops, the impact of ocean conditions on Oregon’s oyster hatcheries, access to high-quality nutritional food, and many other environmental quality and economic development issues facing Oregonians across the state.

Over the last decade, in each legislative session, these programs have faced budget proposals from the Governor that would close facilities and reduce personnel. And each session, with your assistance and leadership, the legislature has stepped in to recover these programs. Unfortunately the Governor’s proposal for the 2015-17 biennium, with a nominal 3% increase for the biennium, again holds the programs at a level of funding that does not meet their acknowledged cost increases.

We deeply appreciate the support you and your colleagues have provided over the years. You know how the Statewide Programs can help the whole state overcome the vexing challenge of bridging the economic divide between urban and rural Oregon. But the OSU Statewides are at a crossroads.

This year, with the help and support of a wide variety of interest groups and stake holders, the OSU Board of Trustees developed a comprehensive proposal to add \$16 million in new and redesigned programs aimed at making progress toward economic prosperity in every corner of the state. Because the newly-appointed Higher Education Coordinating Commission focused its efforts on the *education* elements of the universities and community colleges, it did not consider the *research and economic missions* of the universities. As a result, the HECC did not address the Statewides in its recommended budget to the Governor.

The Governor has indicated a top priority for meeting the needs of Oregonians in every corner of the state. The Statewides are a key component in achieving this mission. We hope that you will join us in addressing a number of unsolved environmental, social, and economic challenges that are robbing all Oregonians of their potential. These include:

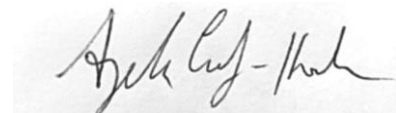
- **Water Quality and Quantity** – The Statewide Programs help rural and urban communities develop strategies to increase water availability for agriculture, reduce water pollution in surface and ground water, and address changes to coastal water quality.
- **Sustainable Management of Working Landscapes** – Much of Oregon’s productivity comes from its forests, farms, and nearby ocean. The Statewide Programs work with landowners and industries to help sustain these working landscapes. They help create practical approaches to eradicate invasive species, manage for at-risk species like marbled murrelet and sage-grouse, and support agricultural production from coast to high desert.
- **Public Health, Food Safety and Security** – The Statewide Programs help to ensure that Oregon families have what they need to live healthy lives. These programs include the full spectrum of food issues, from breeding new crops and developing food safety practices, to teaching family nutrition and promoting community health.
- **Business Development and Value Added Manufacturing** – The Statewide Programs provide knowledge and outreach to re-establish and grow resource-based, globally competitive industries in Oregon’s rural communities. They support private sector development and investment in new technologies that drive value-added agricultural, seafood, and forestry products that are made in Oregon and that create family wage jobs in rural communities where they are needed the most.

We look forward to working with you in the coming weeks and months to make meaningful progress in a bi-partisan approach that addresses the needs of both urban and rural Oregonians in every corner of the state.

Sincerely,



Katie Fast, Vice President Public Policy
Oregon Farm Bureau



Angela Crowley-Koch, Legislative Director
Oregon Environmental Council

Kristina McNitt, President
Oregon Forest Industries Council

Ryan Deckert, President
Oregon Business Association

Jim James, Executive Director
Oregon Small Woodlands Association

Ivan Maluski, Director
Friends of Family Farmers

Jeff Stone, Executive Director
Oregon Association of Nurseries

Tami Kerr, Executive Director
Oregon Dairy Farmers Association

Ryan Gordon, Executive Director
Oregon Network of Watershed Councils

Liz Baxter, Executive Director
Oregon Public Health Institute

Roger Beyer, Executive Director
Oregon Seed Council

Joe Holmberg, Chair
Oregon Tree Farm System

Chris Schreiner, Executive Director
Oregon Tilth

Paulette Pyle, Director of Grassroots
Oregonians for Food & Shelter

Brent Davies, VP Forest & Ecosystem Services
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Michael Klein, Executive Director
Oregon Hazelnut Commission

Bill Brewer, President & CEO
Oregon Potato Commission

Jerry Nicolescu, Executive Director
Oregon Association of Conservation Districts

Kelly Campbell, Executive Director
Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility

Jerome Rosa, Executive Director
Oregon Cattlemen's Association



Kelly Ross, Legislative Representative
Agricultural Cooperative Council of Oregon



Jason Hunton, President
Oregon Seed League



Tim Butler, Chairman
Oregon Essential Oil Growers



Guy Lewis, Chairman
Oregon Ryegrass Commission



Zach Taylor, Chairman
Oregon Fine Fescue Commission



Mark Hagman, Chairman
Oregon Mint Commission



Gary Thompson, President
Association of Oregon Counties



Greg Block, VP Conservation Finance & External Affairs
Wild Salmon Center



Blake Rowe, Chief Executive Officer
Oregon Wheat Growers League



Jim Geisinger, Executive Vice President
Associated Oregon Loggers



Mark Schmidlin, President
Pacific Northwest Christmas Tree Association



Zach Krahmer, Chairman
Oregon Blueberry Commission




Macey Wessels, Chair
Oregon Tall Fescue Commission



Dawsen Koos, Chairman
Oregon Clover Commission



Sara Vickerman, Senior Director
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Will Wise, Chief Executive Officer
Oregon Beef Council



Dan Saltzman, Commissioner
City of Portland



Ian Tolleson, Government Affairs Director
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Tim Danowski, Executive Director
Oregon Winegrowers Association