

IFS STATEMENT TO JOINT WAYS & MEANS SUBCOMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

CO-CHAIR KOMP, CO-CHAIR MONROE AND MEMBERS OF THE
SUBCOMMITTEE,

FOR THE RECORD MY NAME IS JEFF DENSE, PROFESSOR OF
POLITICAL SCIENCE AT EASTERN OREGON UNIVERSITY AND
PRESIDENT OF THE INTERINSTITUTIONAL FACULTY SENATE (IFS). WE
REPRESENT THE FACULTY OF OREGON'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES.

IFS IS APPRECIATIVE OF THE JOINT SUB-COMMITTEE'S HARD WORK
THE LAST SEVERAL WEEKS AS YOU EXAMINE THE FISCAL
IMPLICATIONS OF HB 5024, IN TANDEM WITH AN APPRAISAL OF THE
HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION'S (HECC)
LEADERSHIP OF THE POST-SECONDARY ACADEMIC ENTERPRISE IN
OREGON. AT THIS EARLY JUNCTURE, IFS HAS BEEN ABLE TO FORM A
STRONG WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH HECC WHICH WE LOOK
FORWARD TO CONTINUING IN THE FUTURE.

TODAY I WOULD LIKE TO HIGHLIGHT THREE AREAS OF CONCERN
THE SUBCOMMITTEE SHOULD CONTEMPLATE AS YOU MOVE
FORWARD WITH YOUR REVIEW OF THE BUDGETARY IMPLICATIONS
OF HOUSE BILL 5024: TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY, INTER-
INSTITUTIONAL COLLABORATION AND ACADEMIC QUALITY.

ALONG WITH RISING TUITION COSTS, TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY
HAS BEEN HIGHLIGHTED AS ONE OF THE PRIMARY IMPEDIMENTS TO
STUDENT ACCESS, AFFORDABILITY, AND ULTIMATELY SUCCESS. NO
STUDENT SHOULD HAVE TO MAKE A CHOICE BETWEEN BUYING A
TEXTBOOK AND EATING. IFS MEMBERS HAVE FACILITATED AND
PARTICIPATED IN A SERIES OF REGIONAL GATHERINGS AND A

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STATEWIDE FORUM WHERE STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGED IN ROBUST CONVERSATION REGARDING THE IMPEDIMENTS TO TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY. WHILE THE CURRENT VERSION OF HOUSE BILL 5024 DOES NOT EXPLICITLY SET ASIDE FUNDING FOR THIS IMPORTANT INITIATIVE, IFS IS HOPEFUL FUNDING TO INCENTIVIZE INSTITUTIONAL EFFORTS WILL BE FORTHCOMING, AT THE LATEST, IN NEXT YEAR'S SHORT SESSION. TEXTBOOK AFFORDABILITY IS ONE OF THE PRIMARY IMPEDIMENTS TO ATTAINMENT OF THE STATE'S AMBITIOUS 40/40/20 GOAL, AND YOUR THOUGHTFUL CONSIDERATION OF HOW TO ADDRESS THIS VEXING PROBLEM IS MUCH APPRECIATED BY FACULTY AND STUDENTS.

IFS FIRMLY BELIEVES COLLABORATION IS THE KEY TO THE FUTURE SUCCESS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN OREGON. THE HIGHER EDUCATION LANDSCAPE IN OREGON IS UNDERGOING A DRAMATIC AND UNPRECEDENTED SEISMIC SHIFT. IFS KEENLY UNDERSTANDS THE FUTURE OF OREGON IS DIRECTLY LINKED TO PROVIDING OUR STUDENTS WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS NECESSARY TO COMPETE IN AN INCREASINGLY COMPETITIVE GLOBAL MARKETPLACE. IFS BELIEVES COLLABORATION BETWEEN OREGON PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES, ALONG WITH OUR COMMUNITY COLLEGE PARTNERS, IRRESPECTIVE OF ANY SPECIFIC GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE, FUNDING FORMULA OR CHANGES IN THE POLITICAL LANDSCAPE, IS THE KEY TO NOT ONLY THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, BUT THE FUTURE OF OUR GREAT STATE.

IFS HIGHLIGHTING OF THE ISSUE OF ACADEMIC QUALITY HAS YLED TO ROBUST CONVERSATIONS WITH HECC COMMISSIONERS ON THE

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CENTRALITY OF THIS ESSENTIAL CONCEPT TO THE FUTURE OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN OREGON. IFS IS CURRENTLY PARTICIPATING ON HECC'S INSTITUTIONAL EVALUATION WORK GROUP, WITH ACADEMIC QUALITY ALREADY BEING ISOLATED AS A PRIMARY MEASURE OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS. IFS IS FULLY COMMITTED *IN PERPETUITY* TO ENSURING ACADEMIC QUALITY FOR ALL FUTURE STUDENTS AT OREGON'S PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES.

IFS WISHES TO THANK SENATOR ROBLAN AND REPRESENTATIVE REID FOR THEIR STAUNCH LEADERSHIP ON THEIR COMMITTEES. THERE HAS BEEN A PLETHORA OF HIGHER EDUCATION LEGISLATION INTRODUCED THIS SESSION, AND THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE AND THE HOUSE HIGHER EDUCATION, INNOVATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HAVE BEEN THE SITES FOR ROBUST AND FORTHRIGHT DISCUSSION AND DELIBERATION. THANK YOU SENATOR ROBLAN AND REPRESENTATIVE REID.

IN CONCLUSION, IFS REMAINS COMMITTED TO APPLYING OUR COLLECTIVE EXPERTISE TO ENSURING THE QUALITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN OREGON. THE HERITAGE OF IFS IS GROUNDED IN A COLLABORATIVE SPIRIT OF INFORMATION SHARING, TIMELY COMMUNICATION, TRANSPARENCY AND PROTECTING THE BEST INTEREST OF OUR MOST VALUABLE RESOURCE: OUR STUDENTS.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME, AND I WOULD BE GLAD TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE.