



# American Association of University Professors

*Academic Freedom for a Free Society*

April 13, 2015

Arnie Roblan, Chair  
Senate Committee on Education  
Oregon State Legislature

**Re: Senate Bill 493**

Dear Chair Roblan and members of the Senate Committee on Education:

On behalf of the Oregon Conference of the American Association of University Professors, our collective bargaining faculty chapters at the University of Oregon and Portland State University, and our faculty members across Oregon, I am writing to oppose SB 493. We would like to share our concerns about this bill.

We believe that the independent governing boards are not accountable enough to the citizens of Oregon and the communities in which the universities operate. It is a new relationship, and this relationship is a work in progress, but anything our legislative leaders can do to signal an expectation of accountability is a welcome contribution to the healthy functioning of our public universities. We believe that the Governor **should** have the ability to disband any of the independent boards if the board in question has not met the conditions set by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission. This bill replaces the Governor's authority with the Board being able to make its own decision about whether or not to disband. This does not provide for accountability outside of the board itself.

We hope that the legislature will continue to pursue lines of public accountability for the Boards of Trustees of our public universities. The spirit of SB 493 moves the State of Oregon in the opposite direction.

Sincerely,

José Padín, President  
Oregon Conference, American Association of University Professors  
jose@aaup-oregon.org