



Oregon Bioscience  
Association



March 14, 2017

Representative Jeff Reardon, Chair  
House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee  
900 Court St. NE H-473  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Representative Reardon and Members of the Committee,

We write in strong support of HB 2582, a bi-partisan bill that would enable Oregon's public research universities to better compete at the national level for federal funds.

Each year, the Federal government issues numerous significant grant opportunities that could contribute to Oregon's well-being. Federal agencies often require non-federal funding to supplement a federal award, particularly in areas related to innovation and economic development. State investments toward federal awards send a strong signal that there is broad commitment for a proposal's objectives, which enhances competitiveness. Further, state investments can often be the most appropriate source of non-federal match funding depending on the maturity of innovation in the research arena being pursued.

Oregon's public universities frequently compete individually, collaboratively, or as members of national teams for significant federally-funded grants. Unfortunately, their competitiveness is handicapped because of the lead time to build funding into Oregon's biennial budget, as well as the lack of an effective mechanism or funding source to provide timely commitments of financial support. Our public research universities are not able to point to meaningful financial commitments, even when the state has determined a federal grant would promote Oregon's interests.

HB 2582 would create an initial pool using a small portion of the carryover funds from the 2013-15 biennium. This pool would enable universities to demonstrate that Oregon is ready to ante up when it comes to competing for federal funding. The return-on-investment to Oregon is significant. Typically, federal grants carry a four-to-one ratio return on investment: A \$5 million state commitment from the state could result in a \$20 million multi-year commitment of federal funds and the jobs, technological advances, and secondary benefits that will accrue well into the future.

We understand that Oregon faces a severe budget challenge. One of the best opportunities for filling the budget gap is to devote the resources we have now to those initiatives that carry the greatest return on investment. There is no risk to Oregon – no money will be drawn from the account unless and until the universities are successful in competing for federal funds. The fighting fund simply enables Oregon institutions to compete effectively with their peers at the federal level.

We urge the House Higher Education Committee to approve HB 2582 for consideration by the Joint Ways & Means Committee.

Sincerely,



Denise McCarty  
**Oregon Bioscience Association**



Joel Fischer  
**Oregon Business Association**  
**Associated Oregon Industries**



Greg Astley  
**Oregon Restaurant & Lodging Association**