



To: Joint Ways & Means Education Subcommittee

From: Oregon Council of Presidents

Re: Support for Community College Budget Request

Date: April 10, 2017

Oregon's public universities and community colleges have been partners in supporting postsecondary students in this State for many years. Students who enroll at Oregon's public universities often seek professional certificates at Oregon's community colleges or start their post-secondary education in community colleges. Due to the interconnected nature of higher education, Oregon's public universities and community colleges are aligned and united in advocating for improved funding for higher education across the spectrum.

As you know, a general trend of disinvestment in higher education has led to rising college costs and increasing levels of student debt. We know, however, that our collective future and the opportunities that arise from a well-educated workforce and citizenry do not rely upon a single high-quality institution, but upon many. That is why Oregon's seven public universities are supporting the budget appropriation sought by Oregon's community colleges of \$634 million for the 2017-2019 biennium.

Universities and community colleges agree that all Oregonians should have the financial support to obtain a college or university degree. While Oregon's colleges and universities serve different populations, the bottom line is the same: No matter where students attend classes or job-training programs, Oregon will benefit if colleges and universities have the educational capacity to teach them well, help them remain in school, and help them advance toward careers while accruing as little debt as possible.

We appreciate your commitment to Oregon's students and your leadership on issues of importance in this State.