



# Land Surveyors' Association of Washington

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NATIONAL SOCIETY OF PROFESSIONAL SURVEYORS \* WESTERN FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL SURVEYORS

April 30, 2017

Senator Fred Girod  
Representative Paul Holvey  
Co-Chairs, Ways and Means Capital Construction Subcommittee  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**Subject: Support for University Capital Construction Projects, focus on Oregon Tech's Engineering Complex: Center for Excellence in Engineering and Technology/ Cornett Hall Renovation, Phase 2**

Dear Senator Girod and Representative Holvey,

My name is Carla Meritt. I am the current President of the Land Surveyors' Association of Washington. I have also served on the Industry Advisory Board of Oregon Tech's Geomatics department from 2007-2012. As both a business person who has helped shape Oregon Tech's curriculum and hires their graduates and a leader within our professional community, I am seeking your support for the Center for Excellence in Engineering and Technology/Cornett Hall Renovation, Phase 2 project, ranked #7 on the university capital construction priority list.

I can tell you from first-hand experience that the current facility, Cornett Hall, that houses labs for the mechanical and manufacturing engineering and other high-demand programs, is in dire need of renovation. Oregon Tech needs to add high-tech engineering capacity immediately to help students prepare for 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs. Built in 1964, Cornett Hall has multiple life-safety, seismic, and ADA-compliance problems, and lacks functionality and efficiency in both classroom and lab spaces. The facility does not reflect current industry and student needs and does not do justice to Oregon Tech's nationally-ranked engineering programs, in the top 1% in the nation for ROI for graduates. **Your support during the 2015 legislative session helped us start this two-phase project. Oregon Tech has begun the renovation phase, and now needs to add the new Center for Excellence and finish Cornett Hall.**

Together with industrial space in Cornett Hall, Oregon Tech's new Center for Excellence in Engineering and Technology (CEET) will increase our capacity in Engineering and Technology programs by one-third, helping Oregon meet current and future companies' workforce needs, create 280 local jobs, and reduce the need for imported talent. The creatively designed space will increase experiential and service learning opportunities as well as applied research with companies that expose our students to real work environments and real problems to solve in our communities; and create innovators and entrepreneurs who we fully expect will lead the rebirth of our rural communities in Oregon, including Klamath Falls.

*The Land Surveyors' Association of Washington is committed to promoting the profession and science of surveying for the benefit of its members and the public. We promote lifelong learning, high standards of ethics and practice, legislative leadership, and community involvement.*

I am involved with Oregon Tech because it has one of the few four-year degree Survey & Geomatics programs in the Northwest. The students that come from this program are of great importance to our surveying community in the Northwest. Oregon students need safe, accessible, modern facilities so they are ready to go to work on the day they graduate and support a strong, growing Oregon economy. I encourage you to support the University Presidents' and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission's \$284M list of University Capital Construction Projects, and am particularly focused on ensuring that Oregon Tech's \$42M Center for Excellence in Engineering and Technology/ Cornett Hall Renovation Project, Phase 2, is funded.

STEM education is critical to the economic development of the state, the success of our regional businesses, and to our kids who need meaningful, well-paying jobs in Oregon. Oregon Tech has earned the state's confidence and has a proven reputation for student success by every measure.

Thank you in advance for your support of Oregon Tech and its capital construction project.

Sincerely,



Carla Meritt, PLS  
LSAW President

CC:

Governor Kate Brown  
Senator Peter Courtney  
Speaker Tina Kotek  
Senator Richard Devlin  
Representative Nancy Nathanson  
Representative Jennifer Williamson  
Representative John Huffman  
Rep. Greg Smith  
Senator Dennis Linthicum  
Representative E. Werner Reschke  
Senator Kim Thatcher  
Representative Rich Vial