

June 12, 2017

Joint Ways and Means Committee
General Government Subcommittee
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support Senate Bill 214 -2 to Spur Research Capacity in Oregon

Co-Chair Manning, Co-Chair Smith, and Members of the Committee,

The union of the faculty of the University of Oregon, United Academics AAUP-AFT Local 3209, fully supports SB214, with the -2 Amendment. United Academics represents almost all instructional and research faculty at UO, including more than 65 faculty in the postdoctoral scholar classification.

As UO faculty seek to be competitive for federal and private grant funds, they are often hampered by the relatively high expense they must budget when planning to have postdoctoral scholars work on their projects. At most other universities, postdoctoral scholars do not receive full faculty benefits while working in temporary employment situations. These universities are able to dedicate every dollar to research and salaries, rather than seeing the money leave the lab never to be recovered.

Since the foundation of our union in 2012, we have been engaged in constructive dialogue with the university administration, attempting to find a solution to the issue of relatively expensive salary overhead costs for postdoctoral scholars. It was an issue raised by our postdoctoral scholar while we were organizing and it has continued to be an issue they have asked their union to continue to work to solve. Our postdoctoral scholars know that valuable money that does not benefit them is being lost to research labs, money that could be used to advance science and research at the University of Oregon.

We have received feedback from many University of Oregon postdoctoral scholars who are excited about the progress of this legislation. They continually express their desire to see this bill passed.

If you have any questions or United Academics can be of any service, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Michael Strain
Vice-President for Non-Tenure Track Research Faculty Affairs
United Academics