



American Association of University Professors

Academic Freedom for a Free Society

June 13, 2017

Senator Mark Hass, Representative Phil Barnhart, Co-Chairs
Members of the Joint Committee on Tax Reform
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2830 -1 amendment – Tax Reform and Needed Revenue

Co-Chair Hass, Co-Chair Barnhart, and members of the Committee,

My name is Michael Dreiling. I am a professor at the University of Oregon, where I've taught for 21 years. I am president of the Oregon State Conference of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP-Oregon). Thank you for your service to our state, and thank you for the opportunity to communicate with you.

On behalf of the more than 3400 members of the American Association of University Professors in Oregon, including our collective bargaining chapters at the University of Oregon and Portland State University, I am here to ask that you please support Oregon's future by securing more robust funding for our higher education system and other badly needed services.

We would like to thank the committee and especially Speaker Kotek and Senator Hass for their work on a tax reform/revenue package. The increased revenue from this new plan is significant, and is a good first step at reforming Oregon's tax structure and ending our unstable and harmful revenue situation. While the plan, as currently presented, represents significant progress, it appears to fall a bit short of making the real, long term, game-changing investments Oregon and its education system so badly need.

For example, the HECC indicated in its budget for the 2017-2019 biennium that a funding level of \$943 million would be needed to fully fund all services and current plans and avoid tuition increases at Oregon's universities. The current higher education funding level being considered in the Legislature (SB 5524) falls at least \$100 million short of what Oregon public universities need just to maintain current service levels, even with tuition increases. Research shows tuition increases take a serious toll on college completion rates.

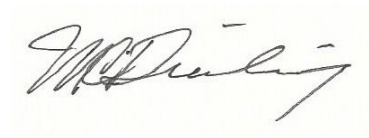
40-40-20 is the strategic vision for Oregon. Yet, a HECC study of Oregon high school graduates finds that only 22% ever complete college (The national average is over 31%). We have a long way to go towards the 40-40-20 goals. *It is urgent that we approve a higher education budget that is closer to the HECC's request if we are to make any progress towards our state goals. **This will not be possible without significant revenue and a long term solution to this problem that you, as Joint Tax Reform Committee Members, can find.***

We thank you for all of your hard work on a tax restructure and revenue package, and we strongly encourage the committee to keep working on a more robust revenue package, similar to the Oregon Education Investment Initiative, originally presented to this committee.

Please support Oregon's future by passing a more robust tax restructure and revenue package than is currently found in the -1 amendments to HB 2830. *We know this will not be easy, but it is imperative* if we are to attempt to meet our 40-40-20 goals, provide vital state services, and continue to move Oregon forward as a state.

Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Dreiling", is centered on a light yellow rectangular background.

Michael Dreiling, Ph.D.

President

AAUP-Oregon