

Testimony to the Senate Education Committee on Senate Bill 257

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Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Oregon Environmental Council strongly supports SB 257. We ask the committee to support the \$30M increase requested by the OSU Board of Trustees to adequately fund the OSU Statewide Public Service Programs.

There are many reasons to support OSU's Statewides. Oregon Environmental Council appreciates all the work of the Statewides, but our particular interest is in the many ways they can help Oregonians address the impacts of a changing climate and help build more resilient working landscapes, ecosystems, and communities.

While \$14.4M will meet the continuing service level needs of the Statewides, the additional \$15.6M will provide funding for them to address key issues:

- Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
- Integrated River Basin Water Quality and Quantity
- Building Climate Change Resilience in Crops, Livestock, and Seafood Systems
- Fire Resilience and Resistance
- Workforce Development and Security
- Community Health and Resilience.

Technical assistance for agricultural producers, businesses and communities is key to addressing the many impacts of climate change. OSU Statewide staff is well-positioned to provide that assistance on topics such as

1. Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from agricultural production:
 - a. Determine which cropping, tilling, grazing, nutrient use, irrigation, or forestry practices produce the least emissions while simultaneously sequestering the optimum amount of CO₂.
 - b. Determine the net CO₂ sequestration amount of current and proposed agricultural, grazing, and forestry practices.
 - c. Identify the least intrusive and most cost-effective means for verifying offsets (CO₂ sequestered) for aggregation and sale under the Bill's market approach?
 - d. Provide decision making tools to agricultural and forestry producers that will allow them to choose cropping, tilling, grazing, nutrient use, irrigation, or forestry practices based on the value of offsets versus production costs.
 - e. Develop and deploy alternative methods to reduce methane emissions from anthropogenic and animal production systems.
2. Alternative means for energy production:
 - a. Determine optimal biomass utilization approaches that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions through conversion to bioproducts, biofuels, or biopower.

- b. Develop novel systems that integrate renewable energy production with agricultural and forestry production systems.
3. Improved agricultural production techniques:
 - a. Develop and produce of new varieties of crops and forest products that are adapted to future climate predictions, water regimes, and markets.
 - b. Development precision agricultural practices that optimize inputs, maximize water usage, and reduce emissions.
4. Fisheries management and protection:
 - a. Explore and mitigate the impacts of ocean acidification, saltwater intrusion, and sea rise on coastal communities, the sea food industry, and tidal marshes and estuaries.
5. Water resources management and protection:
 - a. Develop technologies to optimize ground- and surface-water resources for agricultural production, drinking water quality, and ecosystem health in Oregon groundwater and surface water basins.
 - b. Develop methods and models for reducing negative impacts of agrochemical use on water resources.
 - c. Assist in the development and implementation of natural infrastructure as part of Oregon's water management vision.

The Statewides work with more than just the natural resource industries. For example, the **Solve Pest Problem** program currently under development will help urban people quickly and easily diagnose pest problems and determine effective strategies for preventing and managing specific pests in non-agricultural locations. Recommended strategies will pose the least possible risk to people, property, resources, and the environment, while preventing intolerable levels of pest damage.

There are many other ways that the OSU Statewides support Oregon's various sectors and communities. Their work is essential to our state's environmental and social wellbeing as well as prosperity and productivity of our economy.

Oregon Environmental Council urges you to pass SB 257 which will ensure that the vital services of the OSU Statewides are available to help Oregon face the challenges looming on our horizon. Please approve the \$30M request contained in SB 257.