

## Testimony before the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education

Good morning Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair McLain and members of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education.

For the record my name is Jim Piro and I serve as Chair of the STEM Investment Council for the State of Oregon. I am here to testify to request funding in the next state budget for the STEM Council Director who both supports the work of the STEM Investment Council as well as oversees the implementation of the STEM Education Plan. The current HECC and ODE agency budgets **do not** include funding for this position, that is currently housed at the HECC, and to achieve the STEM Education Plan goals set out in current statute it is critical that this position be funded in the upcoming biennial state budget.

By way of background the STEM Investment Council is an industry led council established to provide recommendations to the HECC and ODE on the STEM Education Plan, which was prepared by the STEM Investment Council and adopted for the state by the Governor in November of 2016, on innovation grants to develop programs to improve STEM outcomes that can be brought to scale across the state, and to lead and guide the 13 Regional STEM Hubs across the state. To be clear, the funding for both the STEM innovation grants and the 13 STEM Hubs was included at current service levels in the ODE agency request budget. In addition, the STEM Investment Council also reviews and monitors key metrics, both leading and lagging indicators, to determine if we are improving student outcomes in STEM.

The STEM Investment Council prepares an annual report to the legislature on the states progress to date and the performance against the key metrics called out in the statute as well as other metrics the council has determined are important to student outcomes in STEM. I have provided you a copy of that annual report today, which provides additional information and data on the progress that the state is making to achieve the goals and objectives included in STEM Education Plan .

While still early in our implementation of the STEM Education Plan, the state has made real progress on a number of fronts. Our innovation grants are providing rich program materials for: connecting math to real life, computer science and digital literacy, and demonstrating the value of out of school STEM experiences for students. Our 13 Regional STEM Hubs are making significant progress by collaborating with educators, businesses and other stakeholders in their region on implementing the STEM Education Plan. In response to a question yesterday by Co-Chair McLain the STEM HUBS have leveraged the state's investment in the HUBS. For every dollar the state has invested in the HUBS they have matched that with over 1.5 dollars of both financial support and volunteer contributions of time from industry and foundations.

While we have made significant progress to date we are still at the beginning stages of implementing the STEM Education Plan. This is a marathon not a sprint and it will take continued leadership efforts by the STEM Investment Council, HECC, ODE, and the Regional STEM HUBS if we are to achieve improved STEM outcomes for our students which will lead them on a pathway to high wage and high demand jobs that are not currently being filled by Oregonians. The role of the STEM Council Director to support this work is critical if we are to achieve the state's goals. The STEM Council Director insures that the key agencies are working together and collaborating and coordinating the work on implementing the STEM Education Plan. The STEM Council Director also works closely with the HUBS to share best practices both regionally and across the country, insure accountability and alignment and progress on the STEM Education Plan goals, objectives, and metrics, and provides leadership and guidance to the individual executive directors at the HUBS.

In closing, I urge the subcommittee to include in the HECC agency budget funding for this important position and the additional resources necessary to continue this work. With that I will open it up to any questions you might have.

Thank you