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March 22, 2019

Dear Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I am the owner of a small group of local radio stations here in Lebanon. I have lived in Albany with my family since 1978. I've had family members and employees attend Linn Benton Community College. I've participated in business related classes and seminars myself over the years. LBCC is an integral part of our Mid-Valley communities and essential to our economic well being and growth.

LBCC is valuable to our business and the region. We and most employers these days need people with education and training beyond high school. The growth in our area has opened up a great variety of employment opportunities which allows our young people to stay in the area and secure good family wage jobs. These folks earn good money and will be valuable contributors to our region and our state for a long time.

If we truly want to continue our states economic growth, and provide all Oregonians a pathway to success, we must fully fund our community colleges and stop placing an ever-growing share of the financial burden onto students.

I urge you make funding Oregon's community colleges and the people they serve, a top priority, and support the Higher Education Coordinating Commission recommendation of a \$647M base budget.

Respectfully,

Richard C. Eads

President/General Manager