



April 10, 2019

Co-Chair Roblan, Co-Chair Smith Warner, Co-Vice Chair Knopp, Co-Vice Chair Smith and Members of the Committee

Subject: Don't Leave College Students Behind in New Education Funding

Legislators have a once-in-decade opportunity to invest in Oregon students and reform Oregon's tax system, but the current plan leaves college students behind.

By 2020, 65 percent of new jobs are expected to require education and training beyond high school. To provide Oregonians the opportunity they need to thrive and for businesses to help grow the economy, we need to support students from cradle to career,

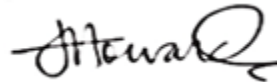
Since Measure 5, Oregon students have seen tuition increases vastly outpace inflation while programs and services have been cut because state investment fell further behind. Student debt is higher than it's even been.

Community colleges throughout the state continually transform our citizens and communities for the better. I know this from personal experience, as the President of the Southeast Campus of Portland Community College. The good that community colleges do is tremendous and takes many forms: free one-on-one business advising offered in community college Small Business Development Centers, student success programs like Future Connect for low-income and first-generation students, and career and technical education (CTE) leading students to high-wage, high-demand jobs here in Oregon. Please don't make the mistake of thinking that supporting education for our youth means stopping at 12th grade; even high school CTE depends in most cases upon continuance and completion of that education at the community college level. Community colleges make a big difference in the high school environment itself, providing dual credit courses to thousands of area high school students each year. In 2017-18 alone, PCC awarded 42,416 college credits to 6,830 students -- a \$4,411,264 value that is *free* to students and a proven practice that leads to even greater student success. Concerning the community college role in transfer, it is important to know that in Portland, 40% of PSU's graduates have attended PCC. Community colleges are bridges -- from K-12 or GED (or pre-GED) to college, from college to university, and from the classroom to

career. Community colleges stimulate local economies as they provide ladders out of poverty for our most vulnerable residents. Because of current funding realities, community colleges are in real danger of sacrificing access and programming to survive. This will hurt students graduating from K-12 perhaps most of all.

I urge you to support Governor Kate Brown's call for including post-secondary education in the spending proposal before this committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jessica Howard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "J" and "H".

Jessica Howard, Ph.D.
Campus President, PCC-Southeast Campus