



April 18, 2019

Senator Lew Frederick and Representative Susan McLain, Co-Chairs  
Ways and Means Education Subcommittee  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: State Funding for Oregon Climate Change Research Institute

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain and Members of the Subcommittee,

I am writing to express my support for the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute (OCCRI) and underscore why continued state funding is critical. Since its inception in 2009, OCCRI's vision of achieving a climate-prepared Northwest has significantly helped the state and region with climate change adaptation planning, connecting science with decision making, and climate change research.

In particular, I have seen the direct benefits of OCCRI using their scientific research to inform state climate policy. The Annual Climate Assessment Report provides legislators, nonprofit organizations like mine, media, and all Oregonians with in depth knowledge about how climate change is impacting Oregon, our people and our natural resources now – and what is forecast for coming years and decades. These observations, facts and forecasts are critical for developing strategic adaptation plans for the climate impacts our state's people, places and economy are already feeling and are forecast to experience. OCCRI's reports to the legislature (and accompanying testimony) have also informed committees developing greenhouse gas reduction policies. For example, policy makers have the forecast of declining spring snow pack and its relation to dwindling water supply, drought and increased fire risk when making decisions about modernizing irrigation, interventions to reduce the impacts of drought and fire on our agriculture and forests, and combatting the drivers of climate change.

If OCCRI no longer existed, our work would suffer since we would have to speculate about the impacts that climate change is having on our state and what is forecast for future years, based on national or regional scientific analysis. We would be hampered because the scientific foundation for our policy work would not be based on Oregon-specific facts and forecasts.

In summary, I urge the Education Subcommittee to continue to support the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute. The State's investment has been significantly leveraged to provide a broad range of unique and critical services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Meredith Connolly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "C".

Meredith Connolly  
Oregon Director