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Education Subcommittee, Joint Ways & Means

Good morning Co-Chairs and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Scott Ashford, and I serve as Dean of the College of Engineering at Oregon State University. I am here today, along with colleagues from our partner universities, representatives from industry, and students to advocate for the Engineering and Technology Sustaining Fund or ETSF.

Thanks to the state's historical investment through the Engineering Technology Industry Council (ETIC) and now through the sustaining funds, engineering programs throughout Oregon, achieved significant foundational gains that have had a positive impact on our state's economy. This biennium the state provided \$25 million in sustaining funds to support our continued progress.

The ETSF originated from ETIC, a results-driven, public-private partnership aimed at increasing the number of engineering graduates, research funding, and private support for engineering and technology programs across the state. After nearing two decades of this foundational support, as a group, we exceeded the original primary goal of ETIC and doubled the number of engineering graduates in the state.

Specifically, at OSU, we have more than tripled the number of engineering graduates and nearly quadrupled research funding. We've accomplished these dramatic gains by leveraging ETIC historic funds and this biennium's \$14M to raise \$40 M/bi in private funds. The historic funds and sustaining funds allowed us to nearly double our faculty. The ETSF pays for about 25% of our faculty and the private support allows us to retain them. To put our gains in perspective, we are now 4<sup>th</sup> in the nation in the number of computer science degrees conferred and we are 15<sup>th</sup> in the nation in terms of degrees conferred. These graduates are added to Oregon's workforce and help drive Oregon's economy by fueling innovation at key employers throughout the state.

The story of the ETSF impact is the same at our partner universities. This slide shows fantastic gains made by PSU in terms of degrees awarded, made possible by adding faculty using the ETSF. OIT has made similar gains by building out their faculty in manufacturing and mechanical engineering. Graduates from all of our programs go to work for companies you all are familiar with: Intel, HP, Precision

Cast Parts, Daimler, and as you'll hear in a few minutes, David Evans and Associates.

Additionally, ETSF funding has allowed each college to build programs based on signature areas of research. The anchor hire for OSU's robotics program was an ETIC hire, and our robotics and artificial intelligence program is now ranked #4 in the nation. At OIT, ETSF has served as a match for external grants to purchase major equipment for the university's pioneering Renewable Energy Engineering program.

The foundational support from the sustaining funds has allowed all of us to aggressively recruit the top faculty to our programs. State investments have allowed OSU to thoroughly assess and refine recruiting and hiring practices and put programs in place to broaden the diversity of our engineering community. We've seen an incredible effect on the diversity of our faculty, and are beginning to see changes in the demographics of our student body. At Oregon State, we've doubled the number of women faculty, and have created an inclusive community that is increasingly diverse. You can also see the impact of ETSF on the diversity at PSU, where 37% are students of color. Industry is clamoring for a diverse workforce, and as a result of ETSF, we are delivering. These important changes in the composition of our school communities take time and continued investment. Any loss in funding will negatively impact our ability to continue this work we are doing around diversity and inclusion. We strive to be model of diversity and inclusion in engineering, and I believe that is something the whole state can stand behind and benefit from.

Any reduction in ETSF jeopardizes the gains that the state has made possible at PSU, OIT, OSU and Oregon's other institutions. Reductions will adversely impact student access, graduation rates, faculty recruitment and retention, and will have an overall detrimental effect on the regional workforce. Conversely, a significant increase will have a positive effect across the board and will allow us to keep driving the Oregon economy.

Thank you for your time. I'd be happy to respond to any questions.