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April 18, 2019

Dear Co-Chair Roblan, Co-Chair Smith Warner and members of the Committee on Joint Student Success:

I am writing on behalf of more than 27,000 students, 700 faculty and thousands of employees of Portland State University, Oregon's only urban research and access institution. PSU with its \$1.5B economic impact, is an engine for the region and the state growth. With nearly 80% resident students, PSU educates more Oregonians than any other university in the state. Over 40% of our 2019 incoming class are students of color, and 43% are first generation. Over 100,000 PSU graduates are living and working in the Metro area and tens of thousands more are working across the state.

There is a longstanding commitment to access and opportunity at PSU. Our tuition is the state's second lowest, thus making PSU most affordable. Likewise, our commitment to serving Oregon students means we cannot offset costs with out-of-state tuition. As a result, PSU relies heavily on state investment and, similarly, our students rely on state-sponsored financial aid. Absent new resources for students and new investments in university funding, Oregon's only urban access institution may no longer be affordable for the most deserving and needy Oregonians.

Thousands of first-generation Oregonians, low-income Oregonians and students of color will either be foreclosed from opportunity or forced into ever larger student debt. Both options are unacceptable to me, unacceptable to our diverse PSU community and, I hope, unacceptable to the legislature.

The road to a better future starts with a better education, and the road to a better education starts with adequate and sustainable funding. I urge the committee to advance a \$2 billion funding package. I urge the committee to invest a small portion of these resources in Career and Technical Education and the Oregon Opportunity Grant, and I urge the legislature to adequately fund Oregon's public universities with no less than \$120 million in additional funding.

You know very well that investment in education is investment in the future prosperity of Oregon, and Oregonians.

With sincere gratitude and respect,

Prof. Rahmat Shoureshi  
PSU President