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February 11, 2020

House Committee on Education
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support House Bill 4098

Chair Doherty and Members of the Committee,

TechNet is the national, bipartisan network of innovation economy CEOs and senior executives. Our diverse membership includes dynamic American businesses ranging from startups to the most iconic companies on the planet and represents over three million employees and countless customers in the fields of information technology, e-commerce, the sharing and gig economies, advanced energy, cybersecurity, venture capital, and finance.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of House Bill 4098, which would result in a long-term strategic plan to provide computer science education opportunities to every public-school student in Oregon.

We understand and value the importance of STEM education, and have made it one of our core principles that we advocate for at the local, state, and federal levels. Increased access to STEM is critical to the ongoing and future success of the innovation economy, and ensuring today's students are ready to thrive in tomorrow's workforce. Digital learning resources and technology integration is a fundamental piece in today's learning environments to improve student outcomes and enable college and career readiness. Furthermore, allowing for early exposure to STEM skills in children's classrooms will not only better prepare them for future technologies, but make them aware of the vast opportunities this industry can provide should they choose to pursue it.

HB 4098 will create a well-rounded workgroup on STEM education that includes both the public and private sectors, as Oregon looks to be a leader in STEM education and ensuring equitable access to education in an ever-changing, technological world.

We encourage your support of HB 4098, and look forward to partnering with you to ensure students today have access to emerging technology and are developing the skills necessary to be college-ready and successful in the global marketplace.

Best Regards,
Samantha Kersul
Executive Director, Washington and the Northwest
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