

February 14, 2020

To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction
From: Nathaniel Brown, Oregon Business & Industry
RE: University Capital Projects

Co-chairs Girod and Holvey, members of the committee:

On behalf of Oregon Business & Industry's (OBI) membership of more than 1,600 businesses that employ nearly 300,000 people in the state, thank you for the opportunity to comment on this issue. OBI members value Oregon's public university system and support efforts to improve outcomes in student achievement. Under this principle, we urge your prioritization of university capital projects this session.

Investing in university capital makes practical sense: University capital projects bring matching dollars that multiply the power of state dollars. State investments in university infrastructure create an immediate return on investment while also generating future returns by improving campuses that attract and retain Oregon students.

We understand the Legislature specifically held off making these investments during the 2019 legislative session because the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) was still completing their long-term strategic plan, with involvement from stakeholders across the state. The now complete strategic capital plan notes the urgent need for renewal of existing university capital. We encourage this committee not to delay these investments to the next fiscal biennium.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on this issue.

Sincerely,

Nathaniel Brown
Government Relations Representative
nathanielbrown@oregonbusinessindustry.com