



March 18, 2021

Oregon House Education Committee  
900 Court Street, NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 2412, -2 Amendments

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and Disability (IDD) –  
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Chair Alonso Leon and Members of the House Education Committee,

I'm writing to urge your support and adoption of the -2 amendments to HB 2412. This amendment includes funding for five different college access programs that were funded in the Governors Recommended Budget. These five programs provide valuable access and supports for low-income and historically underserved students to help them to achieve their post-secondary goals.

I am a pediatric psychologist and Associate Professor in the Department of Pediatrics at OHSU. In this role I have had the privilege to participate in the BUILD EXITO program as a Research Mentor. The EXITO program has provided crucial support to help students from underrepresented communities develop careers in health care and science fields. EXITO scholars have made major contributions to research projects at OHSU while gaining key experiences to prepare them for graduate education. Without the support of the program, the robust training and mentoring experiences these students receive could not be achieved.

As the COVID-19 pandemic has laid bare, Oregon and our broader society are plagued by health inequalities across racial/ethnic, cultural, and socioeconomic lines. One of the most important strategies for closing these gaps is to cultivate scientists and health care professionals from disadvantaged groups. The EXITO program does just this and represents a great investment for the people of Oregon.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew R. Riley", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrew R. Riley, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of Pediatrics  
Institute on Development and Disability  
Department of Pediatrics  
Oregon Health & Science University  
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