

April 14, 2021

Ways and Means
900 State Street NE, Room H-178,
Salem OR 97301

Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward, Rayfield and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to encourage you to prioritize funding for higher education as you consider HB 5555. Providing \$900M in funding for the Public University Support Fund and \$200M for the Oregon Opportunity Grant will preserve vital programs for students and will keep college affordable for many Oregonians. Our public universities exist so that students who work hard will have the opportunity to earn a degree regardless of the economic circumstances that they are born into, and these critical investments are needed to continue to keep public universities accessible to as many Oregonians as possible.

I have prioritized higher education in the volunteer work that I have pursued, serving on the OSU Foundation Board of Trustees as well as the state and national boards of Achievement Rewards for College Scientists (ARCS) Foundation, an organization that provides financial support to students pursuing advanced degrees and doing important work in STEM fields. I am routinely astonished by the bright and inquisitive minds of the students I am fortunate to interact with. We will all benefit if we afford them the opportunity to thrive and succeed. An investment in higher education is an investment in our collective future.

I thank you for your consideration, and ask you to make these needed investments with the understanding that young minds are one of our state's most vital resources.

Best Regards,

Caron Ogg
Portland, OR