

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 write to you as someone with significant firsthand knowledge of the work Oregon's public universities are doing to prepare students to solve the problems that our state will face in the future. It is clearer now than it has ever been that we will continue to face dynamic challenges that will require innovative solutions, and our universities are one of the best tools we have to be prepared.

By investing \$900M in the Public University Support Fund and \$200M in the Oregon Opportunity Grant, you will preserve vital programs and keep college a realistic possibility for hard working and high achieving young people from every background. A college degree is one of the most reliable paths to greater stability and prosperity, and robust state support is necessary to make a degree an achievable goal for all Oregonians, including BIPOC students and those from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Over the past several decades I have served in a number of volunteer capacities at Portland State and Oregon State universities. These experiences have consistently reified my belief that investments in higher education offer some of the highest returns that the state can hope to achieve. I ask that you prioritize support for our students, educators and researchers. Doing so will directly benefit all Oregonians.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kenneth Thrasher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Kenneth Thrasher
OSU College of Business Dean's Council of Excellence