

April 14, 2021

Co-Chairs and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means,

My name is Heidi Edwards (she/her), resident of Beaverton. Today, I ask that you make critical investments in Oregon's post-secondary education system. For 20 years I have been a member of Portland Community College's Federation of Faculty and Academic Professions and AFT-Oregon Local 2277.

As Oregon recovers from this global pandemic, investments in post-secondary education are desperately needed to help best serve Oregon's students, our communities and workforce.

To that end, the Legislature must invest **at least** \$702 million in the Community College Support Fund (CCSF) to ensure campuses across Oregon are able to maintain current services without drastic tuition increases. At that funding level colleges could keep tuition increases to an average of 3.5 percent per year statewide.

With many shorter-term programs directed at getting unemployed Oregonians retrained and back to work, our community colleges are essential to responding to the recession brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and the wildfires of 2020. Our community college short-term career pathway programs include growing and critical industries including, but not limited to Bioscience Tech, Fire Protection, Manufacturing, Welding, and Health Occupations. Not only will investing \$702 million in our community colleges serve Oregon's students, but it will also serve our entire state and bolster our economic recovery.

With this new biennium's budget, the Legislature also has the opportunity to ensure that Oregon's adjunct faculty, who have served our students during a global pandemic, have access to affordable health insurance. We need the legislature to take action on this issue, which is why I ask that you fully fund HB 3007/SB 551, which ensures adjunct faculty are able to secure affordable health insurance.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony this evening.

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