

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Dr. Lisa Avery and I serve as the President of Linn-Benton Community College. I am writing to ask for your support HB 2907 which seeks to fully fund Oregon's community colleges at the \$702 million level. Simply stated, Oregon needs community colleges now more than ever. With the pandemic causing severe financial hardship for so many, our community colleges are the entities who are best equipped with affordable, high-quality education that can be accessed quickly and help people get back on their feet. Our community **DEPENDS** on a strong community college pathway. Here at LBCC, we see this first-hand as we work directly with employers in our region to create training and education programs that help our students step directly into high-demand jobs. And yet, at the same time, right now many of our students are simply stuck. Especially for our most vulnerable populations, the pandemic has prevented many from being able to enroll. If we do not fully fund our community colleges, I fear that these students are at even greater risk of being left behind. Every dollar we cut from community colleges must be made up by either raising tuition or cutting programs and services, and we can't afford to shortchange our communities now. But conversely, if we are supported, we can help Oregon rebound now, and help a generation of students go on to create better lives for themselves and their families. Right now, our students are literally on the front lines in healthcare, manufacturing, education, emergency services, and so much more. With your investment, we can continue to fully be a resource for Oregon's future.

Thank you for considering,

Dr. Lisa Avery

President

Linn-Benton Community College