

May 10, 2021

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Representative Dan Rayfield, Co-Chair, Joint Ways & Means Committee; Senator Betsy Johnson, Co-Chair, Joint Ways & Means Committee; Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward, Co-Chair, Joint Ways & Means Committee and Members of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education
Oregon Legislative Assembly Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Johnson, Senator Steiner Hayward, Representative Rayfield and Members of the Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education.

I am writing this letter to request your full support for the continued funding and 7.42% increases to the Engineering Technology Sustaining Funds (ESTF). The technology industry is important for Oregon's ongoing economic growth. The tech industry requires highly educated and skilled resources and our universities play a critical role in producing the talent and skills needed to fulfill that potential. Support for SB5528 is absolutely vital. I strongly urge your support.

As a current member of OSU's College of Engineering Dean's Advisory Council, I understand how critical these funds are to the ongoing program development and support for all of our Oregon colleges and universities. I know that this funding is vital to support new and existing programs and sustain the faculty needed to deliver them. Oregon State has been outstanding in their efforts to produce students that meet the ever changing skills and capabilities that the Oregon tech industry requires. Additionally, they have a strong focus on increasing diversity of the student population as well as broadening the availability of education opportunities for non-traditional students via their online learning programs. This enables people to gain education and skills that would otherwise be out of their grasp.

On a personal note, I am a graduate of OSU's School of Chemical Engineering. I know how important Oregon State's Engineering programs are to enabling people to build better skills and capabilities that lead to personal growth and prosperity. The ESTF assures that faculty, staff and resources continue to be available to meet these needs.

I also have had the great privilege of working with Oregon State University's Open Source Lab (OSL) to promote the development of open source software and programs. Programs like the OSL provide outstanding opportunities for students to participate and innovate with open software while providing critical resources to the Open Community. This is another example of innovating thinking and program development to deliver graduates with the skills and capabilities demanded by technology industry.

Education has been the key cornerstone for my personal growth and success. It's provided me a pathway to continually grow my skills and career. I continue to volunteer my time to OSU's College of Engineering because I believe that the programs ETIC funded are critical to the success of students and enabled them to start their own pathway to personal growth and career success. The ESTF remains a

critical component to support the Universities and their role in producing graduates with the technical skills and capabilities to help Oregon's economy grow.

Please support SB 5528 to ensure the future success of our students!

Sincerely,

Mary M Coucher
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