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To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Capital Construction
RE: OHSU 30-30-30

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey and members of the committee:

For the record, my name is Danny Jacobs, and I am the president of Oregon Health & Science University.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the OHSU 30-30-30 proposal. It has been an immense challenge, but also a distinct honor to serve the state of Oregon in responding to the greatest health crisis of our time. As the Omicron surge recedes and we develop a post-pandemic framework for our future, I believe we must prioritize addressing health care workforce needs to support and improve the overall health and well-being of Oregonians.

COVID-19 has had a devastating and profound impact, particularly in health care. The pandemic has negatively affected the work of health care providers in every care setting. Clinicians and staff members in hospitals, community clinics and behavioral health settings are exhausted, overworked and overwhelmed. Our capacity has struggled to meet needs, which means we continue to place more burden on the shoulders of the existing workforce.

A survey in September found that nearly 1 in 5 health care workers across the U.S. has left the profession. In fact, Oregon has long experienced a health care workforce distribution challenge, with rural and underrepresented communities of our state facing especially challenging health care workforce shortages before the pandemic began. Difficulties recruiting and retaining faculty in the health care professions – particularly in nursing – and a shortage of training sites for learners have limited the number of clinicians that the state can train. The pandemic also accentuated the longstanding inequities and lack of access to culturally competent care for Oregon's communities of color. The growth and diversification of the state's population is leading to new, evolving

and increased health care workforce needs. At the same time, Oregon's current health care workforce is aging, with retirements and attrition among this population expected to outpace our state's current production of new graduates.

Indeed, long-standing challenges have been exacerbated by the pandemic, leaving us at a critical inflection point to create positive change for Oregonians. Addressing Oregon's health care workforce crisis is multifaceted but it remains clear that we need to act now to train more Oregonians to serve our communities.

I appreciate the opportunity to share OHSU's best thinking on a partnership to train the future health care providers our state needs, and respectfully ask for your support for OHSU's 30-30-30 request. This proposal will, by the year 2030:

- Increase the number of OHSU graduates in key health care professions programs by 30%, and
- Increase the diversity of OHSU's entire student body, with 30% of learners who by reason of their background, culture, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, and/or life experiences, are underrepresented in the health professions.

We must act now to increase the diversity of our health care workforce to better represent the state's population and build a more culturally competent workforce. A culturally competent workforce enables our providers to more effectively deliver health care services that meet the social, cultural and linguistic needs of patients. This can and will have a profound impact on addressing health equity by helping to eliminate racial and ethnic health disparities.

By 2030, Oregon is expected to see a nearly 40% increase in the need for [physician assistants](#); an approximate 12% increase in the need for registered nurses; and a more than 60% increase in the demand for [nurse practitioners](#). As Oregon's only academic health center with students training in every corner of our state, OHSU is uniquely positioned to help the state address this increased demand.

In order to do accomplish these ambitious, yet achievable objectives, OHSU is asking for a \$45 million dollar state investment this session. This request includes two parts.

1. The first is an ongoing increase of \$20 million dollars a year in OHSU's direct state appropriation. The state appropriation serves to keep the cost of tuition low and ensure significant opportunity for Oregon students at OHSU. OHSU leverages this direct state appropriation 4 to 1 with other funding sources, including grants, gifts, tuition and health care revenues, to maximize the legislature's impact in providing the high-quality health care education programs Oregon needs. But state funding has not kept pace with inflation or resource needs to meet the state's workforce demand. With an additional \$20 million a year we will continue to leverage other funds to expand the impact of the state's funding and reach our 30-30-30 goals.
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2. The second is a \$25 million one-time investment, which OHSU will seek to match with philanthropy, to create a \$50 million OHSU Opportunity Fund. This fund will provide scholarships and student supports to help recruit and retain a more diverse student body at OHSU.

To meet these goals, OHSU will expand capacity in clinical programs. By 2030, 1,500 to 2,000 additional clinicians will graduate from OHSU in select education programs such as nursing, physician assistant, clinical psychology, public health and others. But additional clinicians will start flowing into the state's workforce sooner than that upon approval of the funding.

For example, OHSU offers a nursing bachelor's completion program that allows graduates from Oregon Consortium for Nursing Education (OCNE) partner community colleges to seamlessly transition to the OHSU School of Nursing for one final year of nursing coursework to receive the nursing degree. We hope to recruit an increased class size in the nursing bachelor's completion program beginning as soon as this fall, which means the first students stemming from the state's 30-30-30 investment could graduate as soon as the fall of 2023, putting more nurses in hospitals and clinics across the state in less than 2 years.

We know that 93% of our nursing students are Oregonians who are most likely to stay and practice here. And in a survey of 2020-2021 OHSU School of Nursing graduates, 92.7% are working in Oregon. We feel confident that increasing access to OHSU education programs for more Oregonians will help create graduates who remain in Oregon and help bolster the state's health care workforce.

Another key component is addressing the nurse faculty shortage. OHSU will support faculty recruitment, development, and retention at OHSU's five campuses and at each community college partner in OCNE. We will also be able to invest in efforts to increase student clinical placements in rural and underserved communities across the state.

This funding will also support expanding capacity in effective OHSU pathway programs in order to meet students where they are today. Among these programs are the expansion of the HealthESsteps program – a support program at each of OHSU's five nursing campuses for undergraduate learners from diverse backgrounds, with a focus on Hispanic and Native American learners. This funding will also provide needed state match to federal grant funding for the OHSU Native American Center of Excellence and expand the incredibly successful Wy'East program to include nursing and dentistry.

We are excited about the opportunity to bring this critical proposal forward to serve the state, and eager to deepen OHSU's partnership with the state in a shared commitment to educating the health care workforce Oregonians need. We also have a simultaneous opportunity, and frankly, a responsibility, to rethink what health care providers of the future look like, what they need, and how they work.

OHSU 30-30-30 is necessary to meet the state's workforce needs and to better serve the health care needs of Oregon's evolving population. I know that you have many worthy requests to consider, and you have challenging decisions ahead of you. I firmly believe investing now in an impactful and effective long-term solution is a critical component of addressing the state's health care workforce crisis. OHSU's 30-30-30 will help Oregon train our own with a focus on growing a new generation of health care clinicians who better represent the racial and ethnic diversity of Oregonians and who are prepared to provide high-quality, culturally competent care.

Thank you for your time today. We are happy to answer any questions – please reach out to me or the OHSU Government Relations team at any time.

Sincerely yours,

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

Danny Jacobs, M.D., M.P.H., FACS
President
