September 27, 2023

Senator Aaron Woods, Co-Chair
Representative Nancy Nathanson, Co-Chair
Joint Legislative Committee on Information Management and Technology
900 Court Street NE H-178
State Capitol Salem, OR 97301-4048

RE: Update on Implementation of House Bill 2049 (2023) - Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

I am pleased to have the opportunity to write to you about the work being done to implement Oregon House Bill 2049 (2023) - sponsored by the Joint Legislative Committee on Information Management and Technology (JLCIMT), passed unanimously by the Oregon House and Senate, and signed into law by Governor Kotek on July 31, 2023.

I am providing this update report on behalf of my colleagues at Portland State University, Oregon State University, and the University of Oregon, who, as of October 1, 2023, will become the founding members of the Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (Center).

Background: As you know, the JLCIMT has worked in partnership and collaboration on this concept for many years with a broad group of stakeholders that include the State Chief Information Officer (CIO), State Chief Information Security Officer (CISO), and representatives from regional and local government, special districts, education service districts, K-12 Schools, public universities and community colleges, and other public, private, and non-profit organizations. The coalition supporting this effort totals about 150 representatives of nearly 70 public, private, and non-profit organizations.

We've had the great pleasure of being part of and working with that stakeholder group. We want to thank our coalition colleagues and the JLCIMT Co-Chairs, members, and staff for your hard work, dedication, and willingness to partner with us on this important initiative. We believe this represents a unique and exciting collaboration between our respective universities, the State CIO/State CISO, this growing multi-sector/multi-jurisdictional stakeholder group, and the Oregon Legislature. We take very seriously our obligation to timely establish and efficiently and effectively operate the Center on time.

Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence: Oregon House Bill 2049 (2023) establishes the Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (Center) at Portland State University to supplement the State CIO's cybersecurity-related activities. Notably, the Center is to be jointly operated by Portland State University (PSU), Oregon State University (OSU), and the University of Oregon (UO).

Among other things, the Center is charged with coordinating, funding, and providing*:

- Cybersecurity workforce development, education, awareness, and training for public, private, and nonprofit sector organizations and
- Cybersecurity-related goods and services to Oregon public bodies with a targeted focus on the unmet needs of regional and local government, special districts, education service districts, K-12 school districts, and libraries.

*The scope and scale of Center operations are subject to available resources appropriated by the legislature as a Public University State Program.

Advisory Body: Oregon House Bill 2049 (2023) establishes a 21-member (15 voting/6 non-voting), multi-jurisdictional, and geographically diverse Oregon Cybersecurity Advisory Council (Council) to serve as the advisory body for the Center. Following consultation with the Center Director and the State CIO, the 15 voting members of the Council are to be appointed by Governor Kotek.

Funding: The HB 2049 Budget Report describes the establishment of several targeted Funds to help the Center accomplish its mission. Specifically, $4.9M in General Fund was appropriated by the legislature to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) for distribution to the Center during the 2023-25 Biennium - ($2.5 M into the Center Operating Fund; $2.15 M into the Cybersecurity Workforce Development Fund; $250,000 into the Cybersecurity Grant Program Fund as a good faith down payment for State $ Match for the Federal, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act State and Local Cybersecurity Grant Program.)

Operative Date: The Operative Date for House Bill 2049 is October 1, 2023, but the measure includes an emergency clause authorizing preparatory actions in support of the bill's implementation to be undertaken before the Operative Date.

Actions to Date and Next Steps: With October 1, 2023, quickly approaching, an interim appointment was made for me to act as the Center Director, enabling the initiation and completion of some preparatory actions required, for example:

- Ensure the timely transfer of records from the State CIO to the Center. *Status:* Meetings with the State CIO and State CISO have been held. Records related to the Oregon Cybersecurity Advisory Council established under Senate Bill 90 (2017) have been transferred.
- Work with the State CIO and the Governor's Office on timely member appointments to the Council. *Status:* The appointments for the six (6) non-voting Council members have been made by the appointing authorities identified within House Bill 2049 (2023). Applications for twelve (12) of the fifteen (15) voting Council members have been received and are under review by myself, the State CIO, and the Governor's Office. Identification of candidates for the three (3) remaining voting Council members and, subsequently, the appointments for all voting Council members should be completed in the next few weeks.
- Develop a draft Charter for the Council. *Status:* A Council Charter has been drafted and is ready for Council review, feedback, and revision once the Council voting member appointments have been made. The Council Charter would then be formally adopted at the Council's first scheduled meeting - TBD.

- Work with leadership within each of the founding member public university institutions on interim and permanent appointments of the Center leadership team. *Status:* An interim appointment was made for me to serve as the Center Director. My permanent appointment as the Center Director and the appointments of Associate Directors at OSU and UO are in process.
- Develop a draft Charter and Operating Agreement for the Center. *Status:* A Center Charter/Operating Agreement has been drafted and is currently under review at our respective universities. Following the appointments of the Center leadership team and the execution of this Charter/Operating agreement by the founding universities, the HECC will then be well-positioned to timely distribute monies from the established Funds to the Center and other operating partners.

Upcoming Legislative Meetings: To ensure continued awareness about the establishment and activities of the Center and the Council, we plan to work with the JLCIMT Committee Administrator and Co-Chairs to provide the JLCIMT with regular progress reports (written and remote/in-person) as the Center and the Council become fully operational over time.

In closing, the Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (jointly operated by PSU, OSU, and UO) has an opportunity to do something extraordinary and make a real impact and lasting difference for Oregon in the months and years to come. We look forward to working in partnership and collaboration with you and JLCIMT from hereon.

Sincerely,

Birol Yeşilada, Ph.D.,
Interim Director - Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence
Professor & Founding Director - Mark O. Hatfield Cybersecurity & Cyber Defense Policy Center
(National Center of Academic Excellence in Cybersecurity)

CC:

- Governor's Office: Jonna Papaefthimiou, State Resilience Officer

- DAS Enterprise Information Services: Terrence Woods, State Chief Information Officer

- DAS Enterprise Information Services: Ben Gherezgiher, State Chief Information Security Officer

- Oregon State University: Tom Weller, Ph.D., Professor and Head, School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science - College of Engineering

- Oregon State University: Rakesh Bobba, Ph.D., Associate Professor
  School of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (EECS) & Collaborative Robotics and Intelligent Systems Institute (CoRIS) - College of Engineering

- Oregon State University: Dave Nevin, Assistant Professor of Practice & Director
  Oregon Research & Teaching Security Operations Center (ORTSOC), School of Electrical Engineering & Computer Science - College of Engineering

- University of Oregon: Reza Rejaie, Ph.D., Professor and Head, Department of Computer Science