

SB 458 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/2, 3/9

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Appropriates \$50 million from General Fund to Higher Education Coordinating Commission for allocation to Oregon State University to fund agricultural experiment station, Oregon State University Extension Service, and Forest Research Laboratory. Declares emergency, effective July 1, 2023.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Funding at current service level
- Resiliency of natural resources and food systems

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The federal [Hatch Act of 1887](#) authorized the establishment of an agricultural experiment station at each state's land grant university, which in Oregon is Oregon State University (OSU). Agricultural Experiment Stations are tasked with investigating potential improvements to food production and are eligible for certain federal grant programs. According to Oregon State University, the majority of funding for the Oregon Agricultural Experiment Station (OAES) comes from research grants and contracts from federal, state, and private sources. The state General Fund provides less than 30 percent of OAES' annual funding.

Oregon State University Extension Service programs cover seven topic areas: youth development, agriculture and natural resources, family and community health, forestry and natural resources, education opportunities, outdoor school, and the Oregon Sea Grant. The OSU Extension Service has a satellite location in every county in the state.

The Legislative Assembly established the [Forest Research Laboratory](#) at OSU in 1941. ORS 526.225 and ORS 526.215 govern the structure and mission of the Forest Research Laboratory. According to OSU, the program receives both state and federal appropriations as well as public and private research grants.

House Bill 458 appropriates \$50 million from the General Fund to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for distribution to OSU programs focused on agriculture, community development, and forestry.