



February 22, 2023

The Honorable Aaron Woods
Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Information Management and Technology
Oregon State Legislature

The Honorable Nancy Nathanson
Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Information Management and Technology
Oregon State Legislature

Re: Written Testimony in support of House Bill 2049 (Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence)

Dear Co-Chair Woods, Co-Chair Nathanson, and Members of the Joint Committee on Information Management and Technology:

My name is Dan Wolf, and I am the Director of State Programs for the Alliance for Digital Innovation (ADI). We are a nonpartisan alliance of technology companies focused on accelerating change in the public sector through the adoption of commercial technology. Our members are some of the most prominent and innovative technology firms in the nation, including many that already proudly serve the State of Oregon.

ADI strongly supports House Bill 2049 and encourages you to advance this important legislation from your committee to the House floor. State and local government systems face increasingly sophisticated cybersecurity threats every day. In recent years, we have seen cyberattacks that imperiled election systems, shut down entire school districts, and crippled law enforcement networks. Ransomware attacks in particular have increased greatly over the past few years, especially against local governments and school districts. State and local governments must have sufficient resources and cybersecurity workers to protect against malicious activity and prepare for recovery from a cyberattack.

This legislation codifies a “whole of state” approach to cybersecurity that is necessary to meet the needs of all of Oregon’s public bodies. Cyberattacks know no boundaries, and a state is only as secure as its weakest link. For example, in recent years, we’ve seen states with strong executive branch cybersecurity protections suffer debilitating cyberattacks in the legislative and judicial branches. That is why states around the country are adopting a “whole of state” approach that breaks down the traditional silos in state and local government and promotes collaboration across the entire state. Including a diverse set of stakeholders in the Oregon Cybersecurity Advisory Council from state government, local governments, tribal governments, higher education, K-12 schools, critical infrastructure, and private industry is a critical first step to empower real collaboration and partnership throughout the State of Oregon.

The creation of the Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (CCOE) at Portland State University will promote statewide education, research in cyber defense, and shared services. The CCOE will serve as a central engine for innovation in cybersecurity in the State of Oregon. Also, by providing additional opportunities for resource-strained public bodies to obtain cybersecurity goods and services in a cost-effective manner, the CCOE will provide much-needed relief to overwhelmed local governments and school divisions that are struggling to protect their systems from malicious actors.

The Oregon Cybersecurity Workforce Development Fund advances a solution to one of the greatest long-term threats to our nation's cybersecurity: an insufficient number of skilled cyber workers. The current estimate is that at least 500,000 additional cyber workers are needed in the U.S. to close current gaps. As demand for cyber workers increases yearly, this number is expected to grow ever larger. Action must be taken immediately to address not just near-term workforce shortages, but long-term needs as well. State leaders must implement programs that will reskill their current workforce while also developing the next generation of cyber-savvy workers. By establishing the Oregon Cybersecurity Workforce Development Fund, House Bill 2049 creates a foundational element in a statewide cyber workforce development program that can meet both short and long-term needs.

In conclusion, House Bill 2049 represents an important step forward for the State of Oregon in the areas of "whole of state" cybersecurity and workforce development. We urge the Oregon State Legislature to pass this legislation and commit to funding these new entities for the foreseeable future.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. Please continue to consider ADI as a resource as the committee deliberates on this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dan Wolf", is positioned above the printed name.

Dan Wolf

Director of State Programs
Alliance for Digital Innovation