

Good afternoon Chair Rep John Lively and the members of the House Committee On Higher Education. My name is Matt Bisek, the Executive Director of the Oregon TRIO Association.

I want to provide testimony supporting HB2961 which Appropriates \$5,000,000 to Higher Education Coordinating Commission for allocation to expand scope and community reach of college access and success programs at public universities and community colleges. This measure is also aligned with the recommendations of the Joint Task Force On Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education (JTUSHE).

In the last biennium budget, HB 5006 & HB 2412 invested \$500,000 in annual funding to the Oregon TRIO Association and four other college access programs in Oregon. This is the first investment of its kind in the nation where a state has invested in the efforts of TRIO programs to serve underrepresented students in higher education. The purpose of those funds was multifaceted but centered around one idea: serve more students.

The JTUSHE witnessed firsthand the impact TRIO programs can have and our effectiveness at providing wrap-around services to underrepresented students. However, scaling TRIO services is complex as the U.S. Department of Education funds each program in highly-competitive 5-year grant cycles. The Oregon TRIO Association has spent the last year expanding these services to new communities and working with institutions and community organizations to increase the number of grants statewide and serve additional students. As a result, we have added nine (9) new TRIO grants to the state. This outcome will result in over \$3 million in annual funding from the federal budget, over 1,000 new students served annually, and over 20 new jobs across the state.

A continued investment in community based organizations through HB 2961 will uniquely address the needs of underrepresented students in higher education throughout Oregon. I acknowledge that TRIO programs are limited in the impact we can have statewide, despite running effective programming in our service areas. I believe that an investment in the Oregon TRIO Association is a remarkable return on investment that can help maintain the effective management and constant expansion of TRIO programs throughout the state. TRIO is impactful at serving underrepresented students in Oregon; let's work together to increase the number of students who benefit from these services.

I invite you to approve HB 2961.

Matt Bisek (He, Him, His)  
Executive Director  
Oregon TRIO Association  
executivedirector@oregontrio.org  
(971) 988-9506  
oregontrio.org