

Chair Fahey, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Jason Sullins. I am a 3rd generation native Oregonian and a two-time alumnus of Oregon Tech. I have worked in the high-tech industry for 30 years and recently started my own business, Integrity Circuits, where I design electronic systems for the automotive and clean energy markets.

In celebrating Oregon Tech's 75 years of service, I reflect on the historical role it has played in supporting our economy. When Oregon's timber industry was all but shut down in the 1980s, Oregon Tech played a critical role in helping to replace those lost jobs. These new high-tech jobs were high-paying, high-skilled, and environmentally friendly, and Oregon's Silicon Forest began to grow west of Portland. Oregon Tech was the only dedicated institution in Oregon to provide the skilled labor necessary to support this dramatic shift in the workforce.

Despite its many significant contributions, Oregon Tech has remained "Oregon's Best Kept Secret," and failed to receive much of the credit that is due. Most Oregonians are unaware that Oregon Tech produces graduates with the highest starting salary of any university in Oregon and offers degrees for the most in-demand and marketable careers. Where most universities focus primarily on academic theory, Oregon Tech professors draw from their many years in industry to combine the theoretical with strong, practical application.

As an entrepreneur, I have a keen sense for spotting possibilities. When I look at Oregon Tech, I also see a gold mine of underemployed opportunities. The professors are a powerhouse of engineering talent and industry experience, and I see great potential in synergetic collaborations between the many associated technology departments. The degree programs and curriculum content are incredibly well-matched to Oregon's current and future job market needs. I also see Oregon Tech as an ideal catalyst for entrepreneurship. Our students have a strong spirit of innovation and a wide range of technical resources available at their disposal, and the university's holistic approach to engineering education imparts the wide and deep skill set necessary for entrepreneurship. At Oregon Tech, I not only learned about engineering but also gained the most valuable associated skills necessary to run a business. These broad skills, in large part, empowered me to start my own business and serve effectively in many job roles, including hardware/software engineering, business management, business strategy, accounting, product definition, patent authoring, test engineering, marketing, and sales.

Please join me in supporting Oregon Tech and getting out the good news about the new Portland-Metro area campus in Wilsonville.