

Chair Steiner, Chair Sanchez, Vice-Chairs, and Members of the Committee-

My name is Sara Adams, and I am the President of APSOU – the faculty union - at Southern Oregon University. I am testifying today in support of \$1.05 billion appropriation for higher education in Oregon, and importantly the \$15 million dollar support fund for Oregon's Regional Universities and requested in the Governor's Budget.

Southern Oregon University provides life changing education opportunities to our region and our rural communities. In my program, Business, as an Accounting Instructor, I am involved in the daily training of students who will go on to contribute to our community as financial professionals. Most of our students are nontraditional who can gain meaningful and sustainable employment and contribute positively to our community's economy IF and only if they have the educational opportunity that SOU provides.

Right now, Oregon's Regional Universities are suffering from catastrophic funding shortfalls, leading to further deep cuts to faculty and staff positions. These cuts threaten program offerings, cannibalize our institutions, and make our efforts to revitalize impossible. Students can't succeed when administrators cut faculty and staff positions and fail to invest in programs and services.

Our strained budget does not allow us to offer the number of courses at the frequency demanded by our students and with the expertise that is needed to adequately prepare our graduates to serve our community. We have recently had to cut accounting faculty – and one who has valuable nonprofit experience. This will put a strain on our program and our students.

With additional funding, we can secure faculty and frontline service jobs at our institutions, increase service levels that promote student success, and promote sustainable growth for our institutions. Our students' success depends on strong funding right now, not on a rainy day fund.

Faculty at my institution, alongside fellow regional universities, EOU, OIT and WOU, are united in our commitment to Oregon's future. I urgently ask that Oregon commit \$15 million dollars to supporting our Regional Universities.

Thank you,

Sara J. Adams, M.S., CPA
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