March 16, 2023

Senator Aaron Woods, Co-Chair
Representative David Gomberg, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
900 Court St. NE Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Woods and Gomberg and Members of the Committee:

My name is Heather Ellis, and I am the Executive Director of OTRADI – the Oregon Translational Research and Development Institute – and the Oregon Bioscience Incubator (OBI).

OTRADI is one of Oregon's Signature Research Centers. OTRADI is a non-profit institute funded primarily by the State of Oregon, under the umbrella of Business Oregon and the Oregon Innovation Council. OTRADI's mission is to fuel the economic development of Oregon's bioscience industry by enabling the translation of innovative research into products and companies that benefit human health and create high-wage jobs for Oregon.

Oregon's bioscience industry has experienced incredible growth in the past 18 years. In the most recent economic impact survey, the 18-year period between 2002 and 2020, total bioscience employment increased 85% (+5,270 jobs), total wages increased 215% (+$593.4 million), and average annual wages increased 71% (+$31,340). Oregon's 1,480 life science firms and leading academic and research institutions generated total economic impact of almost 66,000 jobs and $15.7 billion in output in 2020 (see *Oregon's Bio Boom 2022 Economic Impact Report* here).

OTRADI was created to help startup companies and university researchers in Oregon find funding partners with the underlying goal of attracting, growing, and keeping bioscience companies and jobs here in Oregon. Since our inception in 2007, OTRADI has leveraged $20 million in state funding into more than $685 million federal and private funds and revenue. OTRADI works with more than 75 bioscience companies across Oregon.

We listened to the needs of these companies and found that there was a serious unmet need for bioscience incubation space in Oregon. Small bioscience companies need to use their limited funds to hire employees and produce the research that will launch their products. These businesses are limited by capital, and they cannot afford to spend their resources on building out and equipping their own wet labs and office space. Therefore, incubators are a necessity for

helping to grow bioscience startup companies, but a business incubator is about much more than just providing labs and offices. It is also about providing all the critical services companies often lack in the early stages of business expansion. To meet these ongoing and needs, OTRADI has expanded to 29,000 square feet of wet lab and office facilities and provides hundreds of thousands of dollars of cost-prohibitive equipment in shared labs and conference facilities. In addition, the OBI provides Advisor and Mentor programs led by seasoned entrepreneurs and business experts, monthly entrepreneurial education programs, and networking events. Most importantly, the OBI is a community of companies at different stages ranging from single employee companies to those receiving their first rounds of private venture funding. The camaraderie and lessons learned by companies sharing space has proved to be invaluable to growing bioscience businesses. Since its inception, OTRADI and OBI have been fueled by collaboration.

The OBI is committed to listening to the evolving needs of our bioscience community and to being an integral part of our growing bioscience ecosystem in Oregon. Thank you for being our partners in these exciting days to come.

Sincerely,

Heather Ellis

Heather Ellis

Executive Director
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