



Service Employees International Union Local 503

72,000 public services workers, care providers, and non-profit employees in Oregon.

To: House Committee on Higher Education

Date: February 6th, 2024

Re: HB 4125

Chair Lively, Vice-Chairs McIntire and Ruiz, and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is David Ramos and I am a Political Strategist representing SEIU Local 503. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 4125 as amended this afternoon.

SEIU 503 represents about 4,000 classified workers across our state's seven public universities, which makes up a majority of the non-teaching and non-management positions on these campuses. They maintain campus grounds, operate the libraries, provide IT services, feed the students, and help them succeed.

University Governance is an important issue for our members – who have advocated for changes to the institution's governing systems that we believe would make them more conducive to independent, equitable and truly representative outcomes; which are especially important given that public universities are public goods and should as a result be held to the same standard of accountability, oversight, and transparency that other state-funded entities and services are.

In 2013, the legislature passed Senate Bill 270 – which tasked the legislative assembly with monitoring the new governance system's progress toward meeting state goals. House Bill 4125 will follow through on that by calling on the Legislative Policy and Research Office to compile existing information on various trends we have seen at the public universities over the past decade with *additional information* from higher education infrastructure in other states to help our state make informed and effective investment decisions.

It's been ten years since the dissolution of the Oregon University System and since each of the public universities has established its own boards. As we head into 2025 and potentially re-evaluate the funding formula for these schools, we believe that this is a great time to ensure that the changes made to the university's governing systems are having their intended impact and that we are continuing to build up these institutions with a solid infrastructure.

On behalf of our members, we urge your support of House Bill 4125 and ask that you pass it out of committee as amended.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

David Ramos
Policy & Political Strategist
SEIU Local 503, OPEU