



March 27, 2025

Oregon Legislature Senate Committee on Education

Dear Senator Lew Frederick, Chair, Senator Suzanne Weber, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

I am advocating for funding for **SB 231** to support the Oregon Campus Disaster Resilience Consortium (Consortium), which will function through the Institute for Resilience, Organizations, Communities, and Environments at the University of Oregon.

Education is a cornerstone of modern civilization, promoting upward economic mobility and creating opportunities. Institutions of higher learning lay the groundwork for measurable success in society. Our campuses—universities, colleges, and community colleges—serve as hubs for knowledge, scientific advancement, vocational and technical training, and lifelong learning throughout the state. Oregon's college and university campuses are not immune to disasters and crises. We have experienced the COVID-19 pandemic, meningitis outbreaks, severe ice and snowstorms, threats from wildfires and smoke, and the tragic shooting at Umpqua Community College. The impact of these emergencies has highlighted the urgent need to invest strategically in Oregon's educational institutions. Such investments are essential to help prevent, respond to, and recover from unexpected events.

The Consortium aims to enhance emergency preparedness, response, and recovery for all post-secondary institutions in Oregon. It builds upon the National Disaster Resilient Universities (DRU) Network. As the founder and administrator of the DRU Network, in 2005, I sought to establish a straightforward yet effective national framework that provides risk and safety administrators, along with practitioners, opportunities for peer-to-peer collaboration. The DRU network's interdisciplinary approach leverages members' knowledge and expertise to provide technical assistance and resources.

The DRU Network offers a solid foundation for Oregon's institutions to connect, share resources, and align their efforts with national initiatives. The proposed Consortium can maximize limited resources at the state level, develop intercampus partnerships, build local capacities through collaboration, and share resources to promote disaster resilience. The investment in the consortium aims to enhance the following initiatives:

- **Development of Incident Management Teams:** We will create and support all-hazard and all-phase incident management teams (including mitigation, response, continuity, and recovery) to serve colleges and universities across Oregon. These teams will comprise both campus-specific and regional representatives to ensure comprehensive coverage for all institutions in the state.
- **Support for Mutual-Aid Agreement:** We will support the adoption and management of the National Intercollegiate Mutual-Aid Agreement for all colleges and universities in Oregon.

SAFETY AND RISK SERVICES

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- Resource-Sharing and Collaboration Center: We will establish an online resource-sharing and collaboration center for higher education practitioners responsible for campus safety and disaster resilience. This center will serve as a hub for peer-to-peer information sharing, enabling campuses to collaborate on mutually beneficial projects.

Additionally, the initiative intends to collaborate with local and state agencies (e.g., local emergency managers, [Oregon Department of Emergency Management](#), [Office of Resilience and Emergency Management](#), etc.) and other institutes, labs, and centers that are focused on disaster mitigation efforts (e.g., [Cascadia Region Earthquake Science Center](#), [Cascadia Region Earthquake Workgroup](#), [Center for Science Communication Research](#), [Center for Wildfire Smoke Research and Practice](#), [Disaster Resilient Universities \(DRU\) Network](#), [Location Innovation Lab](#), [Oregon Hazards Lab](#), [Oregon Partnership for Disaster Resilience](#), and others.).

If funded, the Consortium will also seek to provide service-learning opportunities for students to promote awareness of preparedness and disaster mitigation within their campus communities. The collaborative work will benefit students, faculty, staff, and the broader community within which Oregon's post-secondary institutions are located.

I appreciate your consideration and urge passage of SB 231.

Sincerely,

André Le Duc
Vice President and Chief Resilience Officer
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Director
Institute for Resilient Organizations, Communities and Environment ([IROCE](#))

DRU Administrator
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