

Submitter: Erik Ly
On Behalf Of: Portland State University
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Dear Co-Chair Kate Lieber, Co-Chair Tawna Sanchez, and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means,

I am writing to urge your support for two critical funding initiatives that will ensure Oregon's public universities continue to provide access to affordable education for all students.

As a first generation graduate student and child of immigrants studying at Portland State University, I have seen and been impacted firsthand by Oregon's public university system. I grateful each and everyday to be touched by accessible, world-class educational and professional experiences at an institution like PSU. Thanks to the public university funding my school has received, I've been able to pursue my dreams, access social and financial mobility, and make an impact on my community, friends, and family. It's with these thoughts and feelings in mind that I have decided to submit testimony today.

Invest in the Public University Support Fund:

Public universities in Oregon are requesting a \$275 million increase to the Public University Support Fund (PUSF) for the 2025-27 biennium for a total of \$1.275 billion. This investment is essential to support student access, affordability, and success. It will improve academic outcomes, enhance student services, and strengthen workforce connections for students, helping them achieve their full potential and contribute to Oregon's economy.

Preserve Access to the Oregon Opportunity Grant:

In addition, public universities are seeking \$150 million in additional funding for the Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) for a total of \$450 million. This is the state's main need-based student financial aid program. This funding is critical to safeguard grant aid for low-income students while expanding access to financial support for middle-income students. By increasing funding for the OOG, we can ensure that every qualified student has the opportunity to pursue higher education without the burden of overwhelming debt.

These funding increases are vital to strengthening Oregon's higher education system and empowering the next generation of leaders and workers. I respectfully ask for your support of these requests in the upcoming budget.

Your support is crucial in ensuring that Oregon can continue to serve as a destination for accessible, high-quality education. Your investment in this matter not only

transforms the lives of those it touches, but makes our state a stronger, more vibrant place. You have the opportunity for such profound change that reverberates through generations to come - I encourage you to act decisively and supportively on it.

Sincerely,
Erik Ly