



3201 Campus Drive, Klamath Falls, OR 97601  
541.885.1100 (office) 541.885.1101 (fax) [www.oit.edu/president](http://www.oit.edu/president)

February 3, 2026

Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
Oregon Legislative Assembly  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Impact of Proposed Reductions to University Funding

Dear Co-Chairs Lieber and Sanchez, and Members of the Committee:

I write to you as President of the Oregon Institute of Technology (“Oregon Tech”) regarding proposed changes to university funding in the 2025–27 biennium. I recognize the complex budget decisions before the Legislature across many critical state priorities and appreciate the responsibility involved in balancing competing needs. I am writing to emphasize how crucial it is for Oregon Tech’s students that the Legislature preserve both the Public University Support Fund and the Oregon Opportunity Grant. Together, these investments enable Oregon Tech to deliver affordable, workforce-aligned education and to graduate the skilled professionals Oregon’s economy depends on.

Oregon Tech prepares students for high-demand, high-wage careers in sectors critical to Oregon’s economic vitality, including healthcare, engineering, information technology, cybersecurity, advanced manufacturing, and very soon in the field of artificial intelligence. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Oregon Tech graduates command a median salary of \$70,678, one year after graduation. In addition, Oregon Live reported (December 8, 2025) that five years after graduation, Oregon Tech alums earned the highest median salary among Oregon’s public universities—\$80,500. More than 30,000 live and work in Oregon, strengthening communities and meeting workforce needs across the state. In addition, Oregon Tech generates an estimated \$286 million in annual economic activity and supports 2,555 jobs across the state.

The role of Oregon Tech, and Oregon’s public universities more broadly, extends beyond individual student outcomes. Public universities are a central driver of Oregon’s economic success. As Oregon’s Polytechnic University, we strengthen the state’s talent pipeline, support business growth, expand household incomes that grow the tax base, which sustains public services statewide. Continued investment in public universities is a proven strategy for economic resilience and long-term stability.

Analysis by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission demonstrates that Oregon’s public universities are responsible stewards of public resources, actively managing costs while improving efficiency. The study shows sustained increases in degree productivity and completions per dollar spent. At Oregon Tech, we have aligned spending with our core mission, prioritized instruction and student support, and delivered strong outcomes while maintaining academic quality.

Changes to university funding have direct implications for students and families. When state support through the Public University Support Fund declines, universities must offset those reductions through tuition increases, reduced services, or constrained program capacity, with an unquestionable detrimental

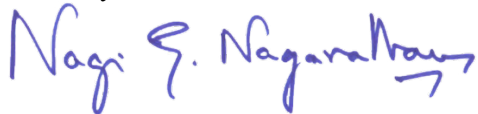
impact on students with financial need. While the Oregon Opportunity Grant plays a vital role in affordability, tuition increases diminish its purchasing power. In the 2024–25 academic year, 749 Oregon Tech students received more than \$4.15 million in Oregon Opportunity Grant funding. For many, this support is essential to remain enrolled, balance work and coursework, and complete a degree.

The economic returns of higher education are well established. According to the Oregon Employment Department, 60 percent of new jobs will require education beyond high school. Meeting this demand depends on a strong and stable public university system that prepares workers for these roles. When this pipeline is weakened, employers face talent shortages, economic growth slows, and the state's capacity to fund essential services is reduced.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to protect the Public University Support Fund and the Oregon Opportunity Grant in the 2025–27 biennium and, if necessary, to use available tools such as the Education Stability Fund to maintain stability in higher education funding. Sustained investment in Oregon Tech and Oregon's public universities supports Oregon's workforce, economic strength, and shared future.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and for your continued commitment to Oregon's students and communities.

Sincerely,



**Nagi G. Naganathan, Ph.D., ASME Fellow**  
President