



February 12, 2019

Senator James Manning Jr., Co-Chair
Representative David Gomberg, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation
and Economic Development
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Salem, OR 97301

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David Ellison
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RE: **SB 5524** / Support for the Oregon Innovation Council (Oregon InC)

Dear Co-Chairs Manning and Gomberg and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of the Oregon Innovation Council (Oregon InC) programs administered by the Innovation & Entrepreneurship (I&E) division of the Oregon Business Development Department. Oregon InC provides critical guidance into how best to invest limited dollars to support innovation in Oregon. In addition, Oregon InC provides critical funding for early-stage companies trying to commercialize technology and create the next generation of Oregon businesses. Funding for businesses at this stage is very difficult to find, and Oregon InC's programs help fill these gaps.

Entrepreneurs in academia, particularly in the biomedical and life science spaces, are increasingly turning to early stage commercialization-focused grants like the federal SBIR/STTR program for funding. These grants are very competitive and require applicants to step outside their scientific or clinical comfort zones and make a business case for their technologies. Working with Oregon InC, the Oregon Clinical & Translational Research Institute (OCTRI) at Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU), has provided critical funding and support to principal investigators to improve the quality and competitiveness of their SBIR/STTR applications, thereby stimulating innovation in the region. Thus far, Phase 0 application support recipients have received SBIR/STTR funding at a rate better than 50%, significantly better than the average.

Oregon InC's programs help ensure that Oregon's entrepreneurs are not at a disadvantage compared to their peers in other states that have similar types of support programs. In addition, Oregon InC's funding leverages private investment and federal government grants, which magnifies its impact on Oregon's start-up community. We are solid supporters of Oregon InC and its programs and will continue to work with the Council and the I&E division in the coming biennium to help Oregon's entrepreneurs be as successful as possible. We strongly encourage the Legislature to continue to fund this critical effort.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David H. Ellison".

David H. Ellison, MD, FASN, FAHA
Professor of Medicine and Physiology & Pharmacology
Associate Vice President for Clinical & Translational Research
Director, Oregon Clinical and Translational Research Institute