



American Association of University Professors

Academic Freedom for a Free Society

April 2, 2019

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain
Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Re: House Bill 5024

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain and members of the Committee,

My name is Ramin Farahmandpur. I am a Professor in the department of Educational Leadership and Policy in the College of Education at Portland State University. I also serve as AAUP-Oregon's Vice-President of Political Action. On behalf of the more than 6300 members of the American Association of University Professors in Oregon, our collective bargaining chapters at the University of Oregon, Portland State University, Oregon State University, and Oregon Institute of Technology, and our faculty members across Oregon, I ask that you reverse the years of disinvestment in higher education in Oregon and increase the amount of the Public University Support Fund proposed in House Bill 5024.

As faculty in Oregon's public universities, AAUP-Oregon members know firsthand the devastating results of our underfunded higher education system. Insufficient funding has resulted in skyrocketing tuition and unsustainable debt for our students. Our students are stretched thin between their studies and multiple jobs, unsure how they'll cover their bills or secure their next meal. Generations of Oregonians have turned to higher education as a pathway out of poverty. Today, the pursuit of higher education may well leave students in greater poverty when high tuition costs lead students to abandon their studies before completing their degree. *If we want to serve these students, we must fund our universities, control tuition costs, and provide the faculty and staff that support degree completion.*

Oregon's public universities need **an increase of at least \$120 million to the Public University Support Fund level proposed in House Bill 5024**. Without real investment in our higher education system, we will deprive our students access to economic mobility and will deprive our state of the talent, passion, and creativity of a generation of Oregonians.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Ramin Farahmandpur
Vice-President of Political Action, AAUP-Oregon