Testimony by City of Wilsonville Mayor Tim Knapp Supporting SB 1539:

Proposed Legislation Designates Oregon Institute of Technology as the State's Polytechnic University

Scheduled for public hearing on February 6, 2020,
before the Senate Committee on Education

Chair Wagner, Vice-Chair Thomsen, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the City of Wilsonville City Council, I am testifying in support of SB 1539, which designates Oregon Institute of Technology as "Oregon's Polytechnic University." Oregon Tech's robust applied-sciences approach to engineering, medical and scientific fields for in-demand, high-wage occupations justifies the polytechnic university designation.

Oregon Tech has a strong history of partnering with industry and government to build degree programs that meet current and emerging employers' labor needs on the local and national levels. As Oregon's only polytechnic university, Oregon Tech offers degree programs in engineering, health sciences, technology, business and applied sciences that focus on hands-on, project-based learning environments. These programs emphasize innovation, scholarship, and applied research where 97% of OIT's graduates are employed in their field or seeking additional degree expertise within six months of graduation.

The City of Wilsonville has been a keen supporter of Oregon Tech's operations in our community of 25,000 residents that hosts 20,800 jobs with an aggregate annual payroll of $1.4 Billion. Many of our high-tech and industrial employers—including Siemens Mentor Graphics, Xerox, FLIR, Collins Aerospace, DW Fritz Automation, Tyco Electronics Medical Products—are actively recruiting the kinds of employees that OIT graduates.

The Wilsonville community has enjoyed a nearly decade-long relationship with OIT, ever since the Wilsonville City Council adopted Resolution No. 2269, "Supporting the 2011 Legislative State Bonding Request of the Oregon Institute of Technology" for the capital construction project in SB 5533 designated as the "OIT Portland Campus Consolidation."

The Oregon Tech Portland-metro campus located in Wilsonville opened in 2012 and has become an integral part of the Wilsonville community. The Wilsonville Chamber of Commerce sponsors each spring the Student Project Symposium that showcases innovative projects produced by Oregon Tech's seniors, providing them with an opportunity to build professional relationships in the community and a range of employers.

The City of Wilsonville respectfully urges a DO PASS vote on SB 1539. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Tim Knapp, Mayor
City of Wilsonville