

Good afternoon Chair Alonso Leon and the members of the Joint Task Force On Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education. My name is Matt Bisek, the Executive Director of the Oregon TRIO Association. It has been an honor and privilege to represent low-income and first-generation students in my work group, crafting policy suggestions for this task force.

I want to provide testimony supporting the inclusion of \$500,000 in annual funding for the Oregon TRIO Association as a part of this task force's recommendations.

In the last biennium budget, HB 5006 & HB 2412 invested \$500,000 in annual funding to the Oregon TRIO Association and four other college access programs in Oregon. This is the first investment of its kind in the nation where a state has invested in the efforts of TRIO programs to serve underrepresented students in higher education. The purpose of those funds was multifaceted but centered around one idea: serve more students.

This task force has seen in your statewide tour the impact TRIO programs can have and our effectiveness at providing wrap-around services to underrepresented students. However, scaling TRIO services is complex as the U.S. Department of Education funds each program in highly-competitive 5-year grant cycles. The Oregon TRIO Association has spent the last year expanding these services to new communities and working with institutions and community organizations to increase the number of grants statewide and serve additional students. As a result, we have added nine (9) new TRIO grants to the state. This outcome will result in over \$3 million in annual funding from the federal budget, 1,000+ new students served annually, and over 20 new jobs across the state.

I appreciate this task force's work addressing the needs of underrepresented students in higher education throughout Oregon. I acknowledge that TRIO programs are limited in the impact we can have statewide, despite running effective programming in our service areas. I believe that an investment in the Oregon TRIO Association is a remarkable return on investment that can help maintain the effective management and constant expansion of TRIO programs throughout the state. TRIO is impactful at serving underrepresented students in Oregon; let's work together to increase the number of students who benefit from these services.

I invite you to include this policy to fund Oregon TRIO Association in your final recommendations as a task force.

Thank you for your time today, and I invite any questions regarding Oregon TRIO Association or our request.

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