



March 18, 2021

Chair Alonso Leon, Vice Chairs Neron and Weber, and members of the committee:

I write today in support of HB 2441 to renew the University Venture Development Fund (UVDF) tax credit program.

As a researcher and faculty in OHSU's Division of Pediatric Hematology and Oncology, I am all too aware of the dearth of novel and effective therapeutics for rare pediatric cancers such as pediatric sarcomas. I must emphasize that funding from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), as well as research and development funding from the pharmaceutical sector, tend to concentrate largely on common cancers, and investments into rare disease research, particularly rare pediatric cancers, remains underwhelming.

In collaboration with Dr. Mark Leid and Oleh Taratula's groups (Oregon State University), my laboratory is performing pre-clinical research on a novel compound that our data shows is an effective agent for potential development to target a rare pediatric cancer called Ewing's sarcoma. Extensive pre-clinical groundwork is needed to consider future development, and after struggling to find NIH funds to support this effort, it was the University Venture Development Fund (UVDF) via the Biomedical Innovation Program (BIP) at OHSU that funded key research studies to advance the work.

With UVDF support, we have generated compelling experimental that propelled further development of the compound as well as intellectual property protections. In summary, without funding from the UVDF, this important project may have never taken off or even gone forward.

Oregonians need development of rare cancer therapeutics that are effective, and the early-stage support provided by the UVDF is essential for these potential "high-risk, high-reward" type of efforts that cannot be funded from traditional sources. Without UVDF to support early-stage commercialization out of OHSU, and our fellow Oregon universities, Oregon will be less able to contribute and compete in the global innovation economy.

I support extending the UVDF program and urge your support as well. Please feel free to contact me with any questions

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Monika Davare".

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