



March 18, 2021

Office of the Provost

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Chair Alonso Leon and members of the committee,

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Thank you for considering HB 2412 and its associated -2 amendment that includes funding for a number of educational access programs, each valuable in their own right. Today, however, I wish to speak directly to the critical importance of the BUILD EXITO program housed at Portland State University (PSU).

Mail code: L101

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BUILD EXITO is an undergraduate research training program that supports students from historically underrepresented communities on their pathway to become scientific researchers. We know that far too many institutional barriers still prevent students from underrepresented backgrounds from entering, and persisting in, science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education programs, and, ultimately, entering STEM-related career fields. BUILD EXITO breaks down institutional barriers by offering a research training pathway that includes intensive research experiences, multi-faceted mentoring, curricular enhancements, and community supports and services that promote students' academic success.

OHSU is honored to serve as the research intensive partner for BUILD EXITO, providing support, guidance, and expertise as PSU develops and implements the program. As the research partner, EXITO scholars are placed in OHSU research laboratories with OHSU research faculty who serve not only as their general supervisor within the laboratory and research space, but also truly as their mentors, supporting students' growth and development as scholars and researchers. In fact, several EXITO mentees have continued on into PhD programs at OHSU with their EXITO mentors, and many EXITO mentees end up in medical, dental and public health graduate programs at OHSU.

OHSU supports prioritizing investments in pathway and STEM programs that remove barriers, create opportunities, and take proven steps toward creating a more diverse and equitable health care workforce to meet the needs of all Oregonians. BUILD EXITO meets and exceeds in each of these areas, and OHSU is proud to be a program partner.

Investment in BUILD EXITO is an investment in the diversification of Oregon's biomedical, behavioral, health, and social science workforce. OHSU urges your support of HB 2412 -2.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Elena M. Andresen".

Elena Andresen, Ph.D.
Executive Vice President & Provost