

School of Social Work

Post Office Box 751
Portland, Oregon 97207-0751
1800 SW 6th Avenue Suite 600
Portland OR 97201

503-725-4712 tel
503-725-5545 fax
www.ssw.pdx.edu



March 18, 2021

Oregon House Education Committee
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 2412, -2 Amendments

Chair Alonso Leon and Members of the House Education Committee,

I encourage your support and adoption of the -2 amendments to HB 2412. This amendment includes funding for five different college access programs funded in the Governor's Recommended Budget. These five programs provide valuable access and supports for low-income and historically underserved students to help them to achieve their post-secondary goals.

BUILD EXITO is a highly effective workforce development program that provides research training for undergraduates from backgrounds that have been historically underrepresented in biomedical and health sciences. BUILD EXITO enrolls undergraduates from Clackamas Community College, Clark College, Portland Community College, and Portland State University and provides a comprehensive training experience that includes tailored science curriculum, professional development workshops, faculty and peer mentoring, and long-term research placements with leading scientists at PSU and OHSU.

BUILD EXITO scholars thrive with these enhanced learning opportunities and a supportive community of peers. BUILD EXITO scholars at PSU are about twice as likely as other students in the same majors to graduate within four years. After earning their BA/BS degrees, BUILD EXITO alumni are highly successful in securing employment in research and health-related fields or entering graduate or professional school for further education as health professionals and scientists.

BUILD EXITO serves as a national model for promoting the academic success and career development of diverse and historically underrepresented students. The personal stories of BUILD EXITO scholars who have overcome multiple adversities and disadvantages to become the first in their families to earn undergraduate and graduate degrees are incredibly inspiring.

I strongly encourage you to support the amendment to include programs like BUILD EXITO in HB 2412.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Keller".

Thomas E. Keller, Ph.D.
Duncan & Cindy Campbell Professor for Children, Youth, and Families
Co-Investigator, BUILD EXITO