



TECHNOLOGY
ASSOCIATION
OF OREGON

March 31, 2021

Co-Chair Lew Frederick
Co-Chair Susan McLain
Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education

RE: SB 5513 and STEM Investments for the 2021-23 Biennium

Dear Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair McLain, and members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education,

I'm writing on behalf of the Technology Association of Oregon (TAO) to ask for your support for the \$5.4M STEM investment in SB 5513, which is included in Governor's Recommended Budget for 2021-23. This investment will allow us to better engage diverse learners across the state in STEM opportunities through the STEM Hub Network, STEM Innovation Grants, and Oregon Mathways.

This investment will help us better serve students who have historically lacked access to STEM opportunities (girls, students of color, students navigating poverty, and rural students). It makes investments in the Oregon STEM Hubs, STEM Innovation Grants, and in Oregon Mathways to more equitably address math curriculum and pathways.

TAO aims to create an inclusive, world-class innovation economy in Oregon and Southwest Washington. We represent approximately 500 tech and tech-enabled businesses in the region, and as the role of technology continues to expand in business and across our society, the demand for tech workers is accelerating. In the past 10 years, the growth in STEM jobs has been 3 times as fast as non-STEM jobs.

Moreover, half of all tech jobs in Oregon are now at non-tech companies. The skills and mindsets developed through STEM and CTE--problem solving, critical thinking, adaptability, design thinking, communication, and professional skills--are exactly those skills that will help our young people thrive in a changing economy and build Oregon's economic well-being, no matter which sector they choose for purposes of pursuing a career.

We appreciate the Legislature's support for STEM education. This additional \$5.4M investment will accelerate our progress and allow us to put more students across the state on a pathway to opportunity.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Skip Newberry". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Skip Newberry
President & CEO, Technology Association of Oregon