

April 17, 2021

Ways and Means  
900 State Street NE, Room H-178,  
Salem OR 97301

RE: HB 5555

Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward, Rayfield and Members of the Committee,

As a resident of Ashland, I live roughly 200 miles from Oregon State University's campuses in Corvallis and Bend, yet I remain keenly aware of the work OSU is doing in communities across the state, including mine. OSU's statewide public service programs, including the Extension Service, Agriculture Experiment Stations and Forest Research Laboratories, provide vital support and services to every county in Oregon. These programs include early childhood support services, partnerships with local school districts, vital public health initiatives and a wide range of projects that support our agricultural sectors. I grew up in Lake Country and learned early on that these programs are a lifeline to rural communities. During the 2021 legislative session, OSU is seeking a \$158.5 million investment in these vital programs so that all Oregonian can continue to have access to them.

I would also encourage you to make a \$900M investment in the Public University Support Fund, as well as \$200M in the Oregon Opportunity Grant. Speaking as someone deeply involved with Oregon State University, I cannot stress how committed our public universities are to expanding access to higher education to students from all backgrounds, including young people who will be the first in their family to attend college, those lacking financial resources, and under-represented groups including BIPOC students. These investments will go a long way towards keeping college accessible to all Oregonians, and will preserve vital programs that help students succeed, graduate and advance in their chosen careers.

I ask that you please continue to support the work OSU is doing to help Oregonians build better lives.

Best Regards,

Sue Densmore  
Beaver Caucus Board of Directors