

Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner Hayward, Rayfield and Members of the Committee:

My name is Matthew Borghard and I live in NE Portland. I am a practicing attorney and a graduate of the University of Oregon School of Law. The course work, mentorship, and clinical legal education experiences I had at the UO were critical to my success and ability to find a job after law school. That is why I respectfully request that you support robust investments in public higher education, including funding the Public University Support Fund at \$900 million, the Oregon Opportunity Grant at \$200 million, and significant investments in state programs, including the Clinical Legal Education Program at UO.

As a law student, I participated in the Civil Legal Aid Clinic at the Oregon Law Center. In this clinic, I worked under the supervision of an attorney to represent tenants facing no-cause evictions and other legal issues with their housing. The clinic allowed me to gain valuable legal experience, receive academic credit, and help my fellow Oregonians. At a time when our state is facing a housing crisis, it is more important than ever that our most vulnerable neighbors are able to stay in their homes.

Our public universities and colleges have also played an important role in addressing the pandemic. Reduced funding would challenge UO's ability to continue providing the fast, efficient, and accurate research and testing required to ensure our state's equitable recovery.

The willingness of policymakers to commit resources to protect the state's fragile cradle-to-career public education system may determine whether the impact of COVID-19 is measured in years or in generations. The budget needs of Oregon's education sector are a recipe for an equitable recovery, and I hope you will prioritize these critical investments.

Additionally, I hope you'll make expanded investments in the Oregon Opportunity Grant, Oregon's only need-based financial aid program. As you know, funding limitations have meant that the grant is not available to thousands of students who demonstrate significant financial need. Funding for the OOG should be increased in order to provide a realistic possibility of college affordability for Oregon's lower- and middle-income students.

Thank you for serving our community. I know you will be forced to make tough budget decisions this session, and I hope you will prioritize funding for public education.

Sincerely,
Matthew Borghard
NE Portland