

Co-chairs and members of the committee, thank you for your time.

For the record, my name is Jeremy Kaufman, and I am a nursing instructor at Lane Community College in Eugene. I am speaking today on behalf of my colleagues in Health Professions and other technical programs at LCC in support of funding the Community College Support Fund at \$702M for the biennium.

This has been a rough year for educators, and especially for those of us teaching in hands-on technical programs that aren't well-suited for fully remote instruction. We must continue to invest in new technologies and curriculum development to meet our students' learning needs safely, but this unexpected cost is not supported by our current budgets.

Moreover, in the context of workforce shortages and an impending surge in retirements from the workforce, we are experiencing an increase in applications to many of our health professions programs. For example, this year our nursing program received 266 applications for only 80 spots; this represents a 12% increase in applicants. There is clearly a great need and opportunity to expand the educational capacity of high-demand health and technical programs throughout the community college system, but this is not possible without CCSF investment at the \$702M level.

Lastly, I want to share that many of my students are in school to transition out of low-wage and unstable jobs—the ones that disappeared during this recession. On top of tuition, these students struggle with housing, food security, and childcare needs, and many could not afford even a modest increase in tuition. Funding the Community College Support Fund at \$702M will prevent tuition increases, allowing more students access to community college opportunities.

Community colleges are engines for economic recovery following a recession. Please do not delay substantial investment in the CCSF.

Thank you,
Jeremy Kaufman, RN