

Co-Chairs Frederick, McLain, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Kate Stupin and I live in Eugene. I am a second-year student at the University of Oregon. I respectfully request that you support robust investments in public higher education, including funding the Public University Support Fund at \$900 million, and the Oregon Opportunity Grant at \$200 million.

The University of Oregon, along with other public universities in Oregon, will benefit from increased funding to create opportunities for students. With the pandemic and increasing tuition prices, students, especially BIPOC, lower-income, and rural students, pursuing higher education need more support in order to fully engage in their education and access the benefits of pursuing this education. University programs are a lifeline to many students, making valuable education accessible, and increased support from the state will allow students more opportunities to get the most out of their education.

PUSF:

Funding for Oregon's public universities creates opportunities for all Oregon students, and it is more critical now than ever. The pandemic has exacerbated existing inequities for BIPOC, lower-income, and rural students. It is critical that colleges and universities have adequate resources to address these disparities and ensure that all students have access to opportunity.

Our public universities and colleges have 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.

OOG:

The OOG is Oregon's largest state-funded, need-based grant program for college students. It is the state's only need-based aid program. Approximately 40,000 students receive Opportunity Grants each year.

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 low- 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,

Kate Stupin  
University of Oregon