



May 5, 2021

The Honorable Lew Frederick, Co-Chair
The Honorable Susan McLain, Co-Chair
and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 5528 - Engineering Technology Sustaining Fund (ETSF)

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

On behalf of the Oregon CTE-STEM Employer Coalition, which represents seventy employers, business and labor organizations across the state, I'm writing to seek the legislature's continued funding for the Engineering Technology Sustaining Fund (ETSF). The ETSF supports engineering and technology programs across the state's seven public universities and has transformed engineering programs, supported innovation and equity, and boosted a competitive workforce.

As the chair of the Oregon CTE-STEM Employer Coalition and as President and CEO of Pacific Power, I know firsthand the importance of providing students the educational and career opportunities CTE and STEM offer as they work to build a brighter future for themselves.

The ETSF is a legislative success story. Over the past 20 years, legislative investment has tripled the number of engineering graduates in the state, more than tripled research expenditures, provided a focus on diversifying the faculty and student bodies of these programs, and provided pathways to economic mobility for students graduating with engineering degrees.

Please support a 7.42% base funding increase to the university state programs budget, which includes the Engineering Sustaining Technology Funds (ETSF). This program is within the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) budget, SB 5528. Investment in the ETSF would continue to support the state engineering programs and the many students the colleges serve.

As our students, teachers and the economy face these extraordinary times, the Oregon CTE-STEM Employer Coalition appreciates your ongoing investment in the ETSF and looks forward to continued collaboration with you to achieve Oregon's education goals.

Thank you for your leadership during these most challenging times.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stefan Bird", written over a white background.

Stefan Bird
Chair, Oregon CTE-STEM Employer Coalition
President & CEO, Pacific Power