

**Testimony to the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education
on SB 5528**

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Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Oregon Environmental Council is pleased to write in support of two Oregon State University program areas, the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute, known as OCCRI, and what's known as the Statewides - the Agricultural Extension Service, the Ag Experiment Station, and the Forest Research Laboratory.

First, OCCRI is a leading entity doing direct research on climate change in Oregon, for mitigating and adapting to the impacts we are already experiencing and will continue to feel. OCCRI publishes the Annual Climate Assessment Report which provides legislators, non-profit organizations, the media, and Oregonians across the state with valuable data and information to better understand current climate impacts as well as forecast future needs. OCCRI's work is critical to informing state planning to help Oregon communities and economies adapt to climate change, and to developing policies to reduce climate emissions.

The Statewides provide invaluable support for growing our agricultural and forest sectors, and adapting and learning new management strategies and new technologies in the face of climate change. Heat, drought, and weather pattern changes are already impacting Oregon's agricultural sectors, and increasing wildfire is certainly impacting crops and timber production. The state relies on sound, scientifically rigorous research and data to inform policy proposals as well as on the ground planning. Additionally, our state agencies will be relying on the Statewides expertise in the coming years to help implement Executive Order 20-04, regarding agricultural and forest sector mitigation and adaptation opportunities for climate change.

The Governor's Recommended Budget kept the funding flat for the Statewides and 5% increase for OCCRI – we respectfully ask for a 7.4% increase in operation funding for both programs - this investment is essential to keep the programs going and improving to better serve so many Oregonians, critical agricultural sectors and climate research across the state.