

To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means
From: Samantha Gallagher, Student
Re: Public University Support Funding
Date: April 8, 2023

Dear Co-Chairs Steiner and Sanchez and members of the committee,

Thank you Co-Chair Steiner and Sanchez and members of the committee for being here today. My name is Samantha Gallagher and I live in Southeast Portland. I am a current student at Portland State University pursuing a masters of urban and regional planning with a focus on economic development and affordable housing. I was drawn to PSU because of its partnerships with the community, I've worked on multiple projects involving 1000 Friends of Oregon, Portland Parks and Recreation, the Portland Clean Energy Fund, etc., and its mission to let knowledge serve the city.

PSU has a student body of 80% Oregon residents that stay in Oregon at a higher rate than any other public university. PSU is also Oregon's most diverse university and has the highest number of pell eligible students in our state.

As a student from the midwest, I've found Oregon to be a state fostering innovation in its urban growth boundary, in technology and the semiconductor industry, and in the sports and recreation industry, but it's lacking innovation in support for higher education.

I'm here to support Oregon's public universities ask for \$1.05 billion in Public University Support Funding (PUSF) or 1.05 to thrive. Oregon currently ranks 45th in the nation in per student funding and invests less than half the national average in financial aid for each student.

We can do better. We must do better to support our students, support the state's economic development and support our agglomeration of industries in ORegon to match the innovation taking place in our state. Thank you for your work in our community. Go Vikings!

Samantha Gallagher
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