

April 18, 2023

Letter of Support for SB 482

Submitter: Kim Morgan

Columbia Gorge Community College (CGCC) serves as an educational provider and a valuable community resource to the greater Columbia River Gorge area in Oregon. As a Board Director for CGCC, representing Wasco County, the growth and success of the institution and its students are of the utmost importance to me and the constituents I represent.

Many community colleges across Oregon and our country, have been affected recently by the pandemic with disruption to our student enrollment numbers and financial bottom line. CGCC has seen that setback in its numbers, as well.

The leadership at CGCC has historically responded to the needs of workforce demands; with our healthcare field programs, and electro-magnetic training certifications for clean energy jobs. They have also shown great resolve and initiative with new programs to the institution such as Advanced Manufacturing, and Aviation Maintenance. These programs are crucial to not only fill a need in the deficits of employment sectors, it also provides a path for students, who complete their training and education, a better income that benefits themselves, their families and the greater community.

The Columbia Gorge Regional Airport located across the Columbia River from The Dalles, Oregon has been considered by the FAA to be an Oregon airport since the early 1940s. With more space being made available to the CGCC Aviation Maintenance program with a hangar at the actual airport, our students would have the capacity to have more real-world work life experience, be more fully aware of the safety precautions needed to work in the aviation industry, and access to work on a broader variety of aircraft than is possible at the college's existing warehouse space in The Dalles.

I lend my support and strongly urge passage of SB 482 to provide acceptance of the Columbia Gorge Regional Airport to be considered an Oregon classroom site for CGCC's Aviation Maintenance program, in order to allow CGCC to receive state funding for an essential part of our college's growth and an industry's dire need for more well-trained aviation professionals.

Respectfully,

Kim Morgan
Wasco County Director, CGCC Board of Education
President, Oregon Community College Association