

April 27, 2023

Senator Frederick
Representative McLain
Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education

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

My name is Dr. Abdy Afjeh, I am the Interim Dean of the College of Engineering, Technology, and Management at the Oregon Institute of Technology (Oregon Tech). Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of \$64.4 million in base funding for the university state programs budget, which includes the Engineering Technology Sustaining Funds.

The Engineering Technology Sustaining Funds (ETSF) are critical for Oregon Tech's ability to make engineering and technology education more accessible by serving more students and improving the ability to recruit and serve underrepresented students. ETSF funds also ensure students have the academic support needed to graduate on time and engage in undergraduate research opportunities. At Oregon Tech, ETSF funds support the ongoing operations/capacity of core engineering disciplines (mechanical, manufacturing, civil, electrical, renewable, computer, software systems, etc.) within the College of Engineering, Technology, and Management. This includes supporting 24 percent of Oregon Tech engineering faculty.

ETSF funding also supports the creation of new degree programs aligned with industry demand such as Data Science and Cybersecurity. Funds from the ETSF are distributed to institutions under a formula that prioritizes Oregon resident's completing engineering and engineering technology degrees and is linked with their wages at Oregon companies. Oregon Tech is proud of our relationships with Oregon companies including Boeing, Hewlett-Packard, FLIR, Intel, Lithia, and Garmin who we partner with for internship and career opportunities for our students. These relationships ensure that Oregon Tech graduates have the skills industry needs upon graduation. These strong connections with our industry partners and engaged faculty contribute to the success of Oregon Tech graduates, who on average earn a starting salary of over \$60,000 per year and 96 percent are in graduate school or employed within six months of graduation.

As Oregon works to attract new growth in the semiconductor and advanced manufacturing industries, continuing to provide educational access to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable students to contribute to advancing engineering, technology, and related professions are increasingly essential to ensure that students graduate into the workforce that supports a globally competitive industry and for institutions to support those students throughout their educational careers. I urge your support for \$64.4 million in base funding for the university state programs budget, which includes the Engineering Technology Sustaining Funds.

Sincerely,

