

May 2023

To: The Joint Committee on Ways and Means

Re: Barbara Roberts Career Technical Education Center



I am writing today to support the Barbara Roberts Career Technical Education Center (CTEC) in Sheridan, Oregon, and its application to the legislature for \$12 million in construction funds.

As a leadership-development professional, I have witnessed the power of hands-on learning that Career Technical Education provides. I am proud that my family's former manufacturing company Neilsen Manufacturing was transformed into the Salem Keizer CTEC facility.

Today we present you with an opportunity to bring the same powerful learning to students in a rural school district. Typically rural students are denied this type of opportunity. One of the cruelest realities of going to school in a small district is the lack of infrastructure for these far-reaching programs. The Barbara Roberts model looks at a regional service level, covering multiple small districts. This is likely the only way a model like this can be feasible. This regional model creates its problems, however. One of the most critical questions is how to fund the Capital Construction. It can't fall on just one small district. It is too significant of an undertaking.

This request to the State of Oregon for Capital project funding is essential. In today's world, where construction of new high schools like Portland's Lincoln High School can cost more than \$240,000,000, a request for twelve million to transform a region is an excellent investment. This twelve million will combine with funds already committed, allowing construction to commence in months.

The Barbara Roberts CTEC project will serve as proof of concept for future funding of similar projects, leading to a stronger Oregon.

Barbara Roberts CTEC will prepare our future workforce for living-wage, high-demand jobs in the local industry. Roberts CTEC will provide several programs of study: *Fire Science; Automotive and Heavy Equipment - Truck, Logistics & Diesel Mechanics; Manufacturing Technology; Agribusiness-Sustainable Plant Science and Technology.*

Now is the time to invest in Rural Oregon through Career Technical Education. The Oregon Legislature has the opportunity to take a lead role in the revitalization of our economy through a \$12 million commitment to this shovel-ready project. Barbara Roberts CTEC will connect our community and lift the lives of our young people. We respectfully request that the Oregon Legislature join us in this vision for generational impact and commit \$12 million to develop the Barbara Roberts Career Technical Center.

Thank you for your consideration.