



WILLAMETTE WORKFORCE
PARTNERSHIP

Representative Lucetta Elmer
900 Court St. NE, H-374
Salem, Oregon 97301
February 14, 2024

Subject: Advocating for the Barbara Roberts Career Technical Education Center

Dear Representative Elmer,

I am writing this letter to express our commitment and enthusiasm to advocate for the Barbara Roberts Career Technical Education (CTE) Center, located in Sheridan, Oregon. Our organization, Willamette Workforce Partnership (WWP), firmly believes in the vision of CTE centers providing valuable and meaningful pathways for employment.

Educational equity is important to bridge the gap between rural and urban schools. While almost all schools offer a few CTE courses, rural schools do not provide the opportunity for students to be CTE Concentrators. Studies have shown that CTE Concentrators have higher graduation rates, earn more money post-graduation, and are more likely to engage in entrepreneurial activities.

Career Technical Education can transform a region's economy. The link between industry, workforce, and schools creates a powerful force for economic development.

Funding Rural CTE programs is an investment in these regions' economic development. Evidence supports that such investments lead to a skilled workforce, job creation, poverty reduction, business attraction, innovation, resilience, and social equity, ultimately fostering sustainable economic growth.

It is a challenge for rural communities to fund CTE programs. The critical mass of students required means they must draw from a regional population. Typically, CTE facilities are funded with local general obligation bonds. This is where they must depend on the support of the state.

Sheridan School District is ready to start construction. Thank you in advance for your support of this project!

Sincerely,

Kim Parker-Llerenas
Executive Director, Willamette Workforce Partnership

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