

February 14, 2024

Representatives Lucetta Elmer and David Gomberg
Oregon House of Representatives
Salem, Oregon

Re: Request for \$5,000,000 in Capital Funding for the Barbara Roberts Career
Technical Education Center, Sheridan

Dear Representatives Elmer and Gomberg:

Chemeketa Community College is deeply supportive of the efforts in Sheridan to develop a career and technical educational center to empower rural high school students in the region with access to life-changing career opportunities and, in doing so, address critical local workforce needs and spur economic development. The project in question is the Barbara Roberts Career Technical Education Center (CTEC) in Sheridan, and Chemeketa has enthusiastically supported its conception and will play a key role in its realization.

The project depends upon securing critical capital funds. We support CTEC's request in seeking your assistance in securing a critical capital funding allocation of \$5,000,000.

Investing state funds in the capital expenses for rural career and technical education (CTE) programs is a strategic move with huge positive impacts. Data show that high school CTE programs have a disproportionately positive impact on high school graduation rates, and they create pathways that articulate well into local, affordable community college programs. These in turn lead to family-wage jobs that support local economies. It is also worth noting that, with Chemeketa's new BAS in Leadership and Management, a two-year CTE associate's degree articulates *seamlessly* into an affordable, accessible bachelor's degree, which articulates into Western Oregon University's MS in Organizational Leadership. In short, access to college credentials at all levels – with excellent careers associated therewith – is, more than ever, possible through career and technical education. For students in rural areas, this depends upon local access to quality CTE in high school.

This project represents an excellent investment in the future of this region of Oregon. It utilizes a phased approach, starting with firefighting / EMT training, Diesel Technology and Truck Driving. Chemeketa has programs in all these areas, and is proud to be a partner in this effort.

Location: 4000 Lancaster Drive NE, Salem, OR

Mailing Address: PO Box 14007, Salem, OR 97309-7070

General Information: 503.399.5000

chemeketa.edu

Thank you for your consideration. This \$5,000,000 capital funding allocation will be instrumental in realizing the dream of the Barbara Roberts Career Technical Education Center in Sheridan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Howard".

Jessica Howard, PhD
President/CEO

jessica.howard@chemeketa.edu

cc: Dorie Vickery

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