

DATE:

February 15, 2024

TO:

Oregon State Legislators

Senator Rob Wagner, Senate President

Senator Tim Knopp, Minority Leader

Representative Jeff Helfrich, House Republican leader

Representative Dan Rayfield, House Speaker

Representative Julie Fahey, Majority Leader

Senator Elizabeth Steiner, Co-Chair, Ways and Means Committee

Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Chair, Ways and Means Committee

Senator Fred Girod, Co-Vice Chair, Ways and Means Committee

Representative Paul Holvey, Co-Chair, Ways and Means Subcommittee on Capital Construction

FROM:

Rod Ray

Former CEO, Bend Research

Chair, Oregon State University—Cascades Advocacy and Advisory Board

RE:

**TESTIMONY - Support for “OSU-Cascades Phase III Remediation and Campus Development,”
HB 5201 Bond Authorization**

My name is Rod Ray. I am the former CEO of Bend Research, a Pharmaceutical Technology Development company in Bend, Oregon founded in 1975. (Bend Research was purchased in 2015 by Lonza, a Swiss Pharmaceutical company.)

I have lived in Bend, Oregon since 1965 (with 8 years away for college (Oregon State University in Corvallis, and The University of Colorado, Boulder, CO.)

I am writing to support Oregon State University’s capital funding request for \$24 million to complete the next phase of remediation of a demolition landfill and pumice mine at OSU-Cascades in Bend. This project will ultimately create 24 more acres of usable land that will provide space to grow OSU-Cascades to over 3,000 students, along with valuable infrastructure that will add to commerce in Bend, Oregon.

Oregon State University - Cascades has changed Central Oregon dramatically for the better. The economic investment by Oregon State University and the State of Oregon in OSU-Cascades has created jobs, bettered the lives of many Central Oregon and greater-Oregon students and families, and created highly-trained professionals now productively employed in Central Oregon commerce.

For example, many graduates of OSU-Cascades' science and engineering programs are actively employed in Central Oregon technology companies. And many of these OSU-Cascades alumni are first-generation college students/graduates who would have struggled relocating out of Central Oregon for their higher-education. My company, Bend Research, spawned an entire "Biotechnology" industry in Central Oregon that is served in many ways by OSU-Cascades graduates in a variety of professions.

Additionally, the investment in remediating the former landfill and pumice mine that is now the site of the OSU-Cascades campus has resulted in the "highest and best use" of land once an eyesore and even a dangerous area of Bend into what is now a thriving campus.

Additionally, the ancillary uses of this land, once remediation is complete, will support innovation and startup of new companies and the expansion and even creation of new companies and industries in Central Oregon.

Finally, OSU-Cascades has added value in many other ways to the Central Oregon economy. In my own case, hiring highly trained/educated staff for my company, Bend Research, was often constrained by the lack of industry and higher-education opportunities for "trailing spouses" and family of prospective employees.

Once OSU-Cascades came on line, there was an obvious measurable change, and we were much more successful attracting the best new employees to our company. And OSU-Cascades has enriched our greater Central Oregon community and culture in countless other ways.

The investment of this additional \$24 million for the remediation of the demolition landfill will return the taxpayer's investment in countless ways—directly, and indirectly as described in part above.

I know there are many other demands on the Joint Subcommittee on Capital Construction. Having said that, I urge you to support this request as a truly visionary, long-term investment in OSU, OSU-Cascades, Central Oregon and Oregon.

Thank you.

Rod Ray, Ph.D., P.E.
Former CEO, Bend Research
Chair, OSU-Cascades Advocacy and Advisory Board