

# SUBCOMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

## **Higher Education Coordinating Commission Equitable Water Access Investment**

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To: Ways and Means Full Committee  
From: Education Subcommittee  
Carrier: Senator Sollman

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On May 13th, the Education Subcommittee received a report on equitable water access, from the University of Oregon, on behalf of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

The 2023 Legislature appropriated \$500,000 of one-time General Fund to the Commission, for distribution to the University's Institute for Climate and Racial Justice, to conduct research to understand and address water needs of communities disproportionately affected by conditions such as drought, contaminated water, and inadequate water infrastructure. A budget note was included directing the Institute to report to the 2025 Legislature on the use of these funds.

The funding was used to award grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$50,000 to 12 community organizations to support local community efforts, including facilitating workforce development in water and environmental careers, cleanup of rivers and floodplains, organizing conferences to facilitate collaboration and inclusive approaches to water stewardship, and convening workshops focused on water law, policy, and science education, as well as emergency preparedness.

The Education Subcommittee recommends acknowledging receipt of the report.