

# **Southern OREGON UNIVERSITY**

## **GOVERNMENT RELATIONS**

### **TESTIMONY OFFERED ON SB 785**

**Offered by Dr. Casey Shillam, Executive Vice President and Provost**

Good morning, Chair Frederick, Vice Chair Weber, and Members of the Senate Committee on Education:

My name is Casey Shillam. I am the Executive Vice President and Provost for Southern Oregon University, and I also serve as the Chair of the Statewide Provost Council. I am testifying today on behalf of Oregon's Public Universities and want to share concerns regarding SB 785.

Thank you for your interest in supporting workforce development and education in agriculture, forestry, and natural resources as referenced in SB 785. We agree that these fields are important to Oregon's workforce and ultimately our economy. This bill however, introduces redundant standards that would increase reporting and administrative requirements, further complicating the pathways for high school students to pursue these important career opportunities. We encourage the legislature to continue funding the Public University Support Fund to ensure our universities have a stable funding base, as well as fully fund the Oregon Opportunity Grant, which offers all students a better opportunity to participate in postsecondary education.

Thank you for providing this time for me to express the concerns raised on behalf of Oregon's Public Universities. We appreciate your leadership, service, and interest in furthering postsecondary student success.