



Office of the President

March 14, 2025

House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Support for House Bill 3029 – Strengthening Workforce Development and Higher Education Alignment

Chair Hudson and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Eastern Oregon University (EOU), I am pleased to express my strong support for House Bill 3029, which advances workforce development strategies and strengthens the alignment between Oregon’s higher education institutions and workforce initiatives. This legislation represents a crucial step toward fostering economic vibrancy across the state, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

EOU, as Oregon’s Rural University, plays a pivotal role in preparing students for high-demand careers that address critical workforce shortages. HB 3029’s emphasis on industry-sector partnerships, strategic workforce planning, and local workforce development board collaboration will ensure that higher education institutions can better align academic programs with the evolving needs of Oregon’s economy. The bill’s provisions for grant-funded workforce training and targeted recruitment strategies are particularly valuable in increasing participation from priority populations, expanding economic opportunities, and enhancing the talent pipeline in key industries.

By strengthening partnerships between local industry leaders, workforce development boards, and educational institutions, this legislation will facilitate innovative solutions to Oregon’s workforce challenges. It will also support initiatives that provide students with access to high-value credentials, real-world training experiences, and career pathways that contribute directly to the state’s economic growth.

Eastern Oregon University is committed to being a partner in these efforts, ensuring that rural communities remain active contributors to Oregon’s workforce and economic development. I respectfully urge your support of House Bill 3029 and appreciate your leadership in advancing policies that create meaningful workforce opportunities for Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Kelly A. Ryan, Ph.D.
President
Eastern Oregon University