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Testimony in Support of the University Innovation Research Fund (UIRF) funding
Gaby Cruz Thompson | Director, Corporate University Research | Intel Corporation

Co-Chairs Woods & Gomberg and members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is **Gaby Cruz Thompson**, and I serve as **Director, Corporate University Research** at Intel Corporation. For nearly five decades, Intel has played a foundational role in Oregon's semiconductor ecosystem, employing thousands of Oregonians and leading advancements in AI, chip design, and semiconductor manufacturing.

The **University Innovation Research Fund (UIRF)** is a critical tool that ensures Oregon remains competitive in securing federal research dollars—funding that fuels economic development, technological leadership, and workforce growth.

Intel is a **core partner** in the **Frontiers of Advanced Semiconductor Technology (FAST) Regional Innovation Engine**, a transformative initiative led by **Oregon State University** and supported by over **60 public and private partners**. This National Science Foundation-backed program is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to **grow Oregon's semiconductor ecosystem** through:

- **Investment in AI-driven semiconductor R&D**, spanning materials, chip design, and testing.
- **Expansion of workforce development programs**, from K-12 STEM education to higher education partnerships.
- **Support for semiconductor startups and commercialization** to drive innovation and economic growth.

Intel has already committed **\$5 million in in-kind contributions** to FAST, providing technical expertise, research access, and investment guidance. The NSF expects states to match federal funds at a **2:1 ratio**—and Business Oregon's \$10 million commitment through UIRF is a strong first step.

However, competing states are investing significantly more: **Texas recently secured an \$840 million microelectronics award from the Department of Defense, leveraging \$552 million from the Texas Legislature**. Florida has similarly committed nearly **\$300 million** to semiconductor innovation.

Without increased state investment, Oregon risks **falling behind**. That is why we strongly urge the Legislature to approve a **\$30 million investment in the UIRF in the 2025-27 biennium** to ensure that Oregon remains a national leader in semiconductor research and workforce development. This funding will:

- **Strengthen Oregon's ability to secure major federal R&D awards.**
- **Expand industry-academic partnerships that drive innovation.**

- **Develop the next generation of skilled semiconductor workers.**

The NSF **Regional Innovation Engine** presents a historic opportunity for Oregon, but **without sustained state investment through UIRF, we risk losing this momentum**. We urge your support to help Oregon **lead the future of semiconductor and AI innovation** for decades to come.

Thank you for your time, and I welcome any questions.

Very sincerely,

Gaby Cruz Thompson

Director, Corporate University Research