

Written Testimony of Chelsea Kendrick, Graduate Student University of Washington  
Intern, Oregon UAS Accelerator

Before the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and  
Economic Development

In Support of House Bill 5024

March 14, 2025

Co-Chair Woods, Co-Chair Gomberg, and members of the Joint Committee on Ways  
and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development,

My name is Chelsea Kendrick, and I am a Pendleton, Oregon native that had the privilege of serving as an intern with the Oregon UAS Accelerator, an opportunity that has been instrumental in shaping my future. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of House Bill 5024, which provides the necessary funding for Business Oregon and the Oregon UAS Accelerator, ensuring that students like me have access to life-changing career development experiences.

As a student with a deep interest in autonomous systems, robotics, and emerging technology, I knew that breaking into this industry would be challenging. The Oregon UAS Accelerator gave me a unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience, work directly with startup founders, and learn from industry professionals who are developing groundbreaking drone and robotics technology. Instead of just learning in a classroom, I was able to contribute to real-world projects, apply my skills, and build meaningful connections with industry leaders.

The experience I gained through this internship was invaluable. I developed technical skills, gained practical business knowledge, and worked alongside some of Oregon's most innovative startups. This experience not only prepared me for my future career but also gave me the confidence to pursue opportunities I never thought possible.

Without the funding provided through House Bill 5024, internships like mine—and the career pathways they create—could disappear. The Oregon UAS Accelerator is more than just a startup program; it is an innovation and workforce development hub that connects students with real opportunities to succeed in high-tech fields.

I strongly urge the committee to support House Bill 5024 to ensure that students continue to benefit from the career pathways, mentorship, and real-world experience that programs like the Oregon UAS Accelerator provide. This funding is an investment in the next generation of Oregon's workforce, ensuring that students like me can contribute to the future of autonomy, robotics, and advanced technology in our state.

Thank you for your time and your commitment to supporting students, innovation, and workforce development in Oregon.

Respectfully submitted,

Chelsea Kendrick

Intern, Oregon UAS Accelerator