
KOSHKA FOUNDATION FOR SAFE SCHOOLS

March 25, 2025

Oregon Legislature
Senate Committee on Education

Dear Senator Lew Frederick, Chair, Senator Suzanne Weber, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to advocate strongly for funding SB 231 for the Oregon Campus Disaster Resilience Consortium, which would operate through the Institute for Resilience, Organizations, Communities, and Environments at the University of Oregon.

Oregon, as many states, is susceptible to disasters and crises on its college and university campuses. I started a non-profit organization, The Koshka Foundation for Safe Schools, in the wake of a school shooting that forever changed my community as a student at Virginia Tech in 2007. I am now based in the Pacific Northwest and have the privilege of serving as a member of the Advisory Committee to the Disaster Resilient Universities (DRU). From my experience in seeing the work of the DRU in bringing practitioners together in Oregon, there is a deep commitment to ensuring violence and crisis prevention, and a strong ability to work collaboratively with local and national partners to share knowledge and best practices. With Senate Bill 231, there is an urgent opportunity to continue and enhance this important work.

It is of upmost importance to keep our colleges and universities safe, and equally prepared throughout the state. Senate Bill 231 would greatly increase Oregon's capacity as a leader in emergency preparedness, prevention and response by:

- Expanding the existing national Disaster Resilient Universities (DRU) Network that the University of Oregon has coordinated since 2005, creating a solid foundation for Oregon's institutions to connect, leverage, and align resources with the national DRU Network.
- Investing in the well-being and resilience of colleges and universities, as the Oregon Campus Resilience Consortium would provide tools and resources for all institutions to be prepared for hazards, assisting institutions with more limited funding for security and preparedness planning
- Provide leadership and training for colleges and universities to further develop their emergency management strategic and recovery plans, both critical aspects of preparedness. A 2022 DRU survey, the National Higher Education Survey, shows these recovery plans are not institutionalized or created in the majority of schools
- Provide funding for more colleges and universities to develop and train their behavioral threat assessment and management teams, a critical and evidence-backed method for preventing mass casualty events in schools and communities

The Oregon Campus Disaster Resilience Consortium is essential for providing the disaster preparation, response, and recovery resources that all colleges and universities in Oregon need. We must secure funding for this initiative to enhance institutional preparedness, safety, and resilience across Oregon's post-secondary education sector.

The need for a statewide effort like this is not just important; it is urgent.

I urge you to prioritize this funding request. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or require more information. Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit this letter.

Sincerely,

Kristina Anderson Froling
Executive Director
The Koshka Foundation for Safe Schools