

Testimony – Oregon Joint Way and Means Committee – Education

Bill Graupp – March, 26, 2025

Good Afternoon

Co-Charis Solman and Ruiz and members of the committee,

My name is Bill Graupp and I am the current treasurer of Oregon Career Technical Education Student Leadership Foundation (OCTESLF), the team that distributes the Oregon Career Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) funding provided through the Oregon Dept of Education.

The OCTESLF funding through ODE provides funding for all the ODE certified CTSO's in Oregon. The funds are split between providing organization leadership and services as well as helping students pay for membership fees in our CTSO programs. Over 10,000 students are served in CTE fields of study through Oregon CTSO organizations. This grant funding is critical for our equitable delivery of CTE studies throughout our state.

As a primary source of education to a large population of Oregon Students, CTSO's provide educational curriculum and competition in field of studies that are not available in many of our schools, especially in our rural areas. For example, our leadership team with OR-FBLA are working on a program to bring an introduction to AI concepts into our high school program, an effort that could go nation-wide if successful.

The current proposed Governor's budget calls for an 11% decrease in funding of these CTE programs. This amount of reduced investments will harm student outcomes in our CTE programs. The CTSO programs are unique in their ability to bring in private businesses and industries in participating in our student's education. CTSO's also bring in the concept of Project-Based Learning. Current education research shows that student engagement and outcomes are benefited when curriculum engages them in current and relevant issues in our society.

We ask that the committee consider at a minimum holding the investment in our CTSO programs at the current level, just under \$1M, and ask for an increasing it to \$2M to make access to these programs more equitable to all students.

Thank you for your time and commitment to Oregon Education