

April 10, 2025

Senator Janeen Sollman  
Representative Ricki Ruiz  
Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education

Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Senate Bill 5525

Dear Senator Sollman, Representative Ruiz, and members of the Joint Subcommittee on Education,

I am writing to you in support of SB 5525, which would appropriate moneys from the General Fund to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for funding the second biennium of the Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (OCCoE). As the IT Director for the City of Eugene, I was appointed by Governor Kotek to serve on the Advisory Council for the OCCoE, representing the technology concerns of 241 Oregon cities. In my position as a technology leader, I have to make decisions daily on tradeoffs of budgetary constraints versus cybersecurity capabilities of the city. The passing of this bill is important to me because cities across Oregon are struggling to provide adequate cybersecurity in the face of increased global threats and shrinking budgets.

According to the US government accountability office, there has been a 500% increase in cybersecurity attacks against government entities since 2016, and the cost to prevent or mitigate these attacks is also increasing dramatically. Our city has had to spend five times as much in personnel and technology to fight cyber attacks as we did in pre-pandemic years, and our situation is not unique – in fact, our size leaves us far better resourced than most cities around Oregon. Every government entity faces these same increasing risks across all sectors: cities, counties, tribal, education, special districts, etc.

The Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence can provide critical cyber protection for cities too small to have any dedicated personnel or the expensive software and systems necessary to deter cyber crime. This protects the citizens of Oregon whose data and critical services are at risk in any breach of government systems. The most crucial needs I see for our cities are:

- Workforce development—there are thousands of open jobs in cybersecurity, making it difficult to hire for
- Affordable Security Operations Center (SOC) services
- Assistance with Cybersecurity insurance
- Cybersecurity awareness and public outreach

Small and medium-sized cities across Oregon are in desperate need of these initiatives that OCCoE is working to expand. The kind of 24/7 monitoring that the SOCs would be able to provide with adequate funding is critical to securing their systems including critical infrastructure like 911 centers, water & electric utilities, police and fire response, airports, other transportation, etc. The cost of prevention is far less than dealing with the aftermath of a breach, as experiences in Oregon like that of Curry County, show.

If this bill is passed, Oregon's government entities will have more resources toward securing a more robust future cybersecurity workforce, increased education around prevention and detection of cyber attacks, and crucial monitoring of their systems, which they may not be able to afford without this funding. I urge you to support SB 5525.

Thank you very much for your time.



Robin Mayall  
Director of Information Services, City of Eugene