April 18, 2025

Dear Members of the Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education:

The Oregon Dental Association, representing nearly 2,000 dentists across the state, fully supports Senate Bill 5525, the budget for Oregon Health and Sciences University (OHSU).

Over half of our members graduated from the OHSU School of Dentistry and I know firsthand the important role the school plays in our community and state. OHSU trains, it teaches, and it mentors, helping shape dentists into who they are today. And now, many of us have the good fortune to mentor and support today's students.

For example, I have the privilege of working at the School Dentistry in the General Practice Residency program and in the Division of Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery. I also serve as the Director for Quality and Patient Safety for the hospital residencies and work closely with residents that are receiving additional training to care for medically complex and special needs patients. This type of training does not exist anywhere else in our state and helps to provide care for our most vulnerable Oregonians.

In addition to the DMD program at OHSU, the school offers six advanced education programs, including: Endodontology, Orthodontics, Pediatric Dentistry, Periodontology, Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery, and a General Practice Residency program. These offerings draw students from across the country to study and practice in Oregon, diversifying our future workforce.

OHSU's School of Dentistry is filled with professionals dedicated to ensuring that dental students graduate are ready to meet the oral health needs of our state. Further, the school is critical to ensure Oregon's dental workforce needs are met now and into the future.

OHSU is a valued partner with the ODA and dentists across the state. OHSU provides real leadership on dental issues affecting both our profession and the general population's health.

We encourage your full support of Senate Bill 5525.

Sincerely,

Caroline Zeller, DDS
President, Oregon Dental Association