

Submitter: Lisa Shaw

Committee: Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education

RE: Support for SB 5525 – Oregon Community College Funding

Dear Co-Chair Sollman, Co-Chair Ruiz, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Lisa Shaw, and I serve as Sr. Budget & Program Analyst at Clackamas Community College (CCC). I am writing to express strong support for Senate Bill 5525, which proposes \$920 million in funding for Oregon's 17 community colleges in the 2025-27 biennium.

Community colleges are Oregon's most affordable entry point to post-secondary education and career training. Our programs are tailored to meet the needs of our community, providing pathways to family-wage careers and addressing critical workforce demands. Enrollment at Oregon's community colleges has increased by 7.5% over the last academic year, with the fastest growth in Career and Technical Education (CTE) degrees and short-term career certificates. These programs, while essential, are also among the most expensive to offer due to the need for specialized equipment and hands-on training.

The demand for student support services such as food, housing assistance, and other wraparound services has increased drastically over the past five years. At CCC, we are committed to providing these essential services to ensure student success. Without sufficient state support, we risk having to cut programs or critical support services.

As long-time supporter of the mission and scope of community college education, I became even more committed after the recent experiences of a close friend returning to college here mid-career. My friend, and former colleague, expressed interest in supplementing her on-the-job accounting experiences with formal education and researched her options at CCC. The environment and student-centered approach made it possible for her to complete her associate's degree in accounting (with honors!) in 24 months while working full-time and maintaining her family obligations. I attended her graduation in June of 2024 and was *overwhelmed* by the energy of the graduates and the sheer joy of the crowd! It has been my honor to support Clackamas Community College as an employee over the past academic year and I am excited for what our students can accomplish. With your support of SB 5525, my hope is that we can expand our reach and increase our impact.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to Oregon's students. Please support SB 5525 and fully fund community colleges at \$920 million for the next biennium.

Sincerely,

Lisa Shaw

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