



April 28, 2025

Honorable Ricki Ruiz
Honorable Janeen Sollman
Joint Committee on Ways & Means, Subcommittee on Education
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 5525 – Community College Support Fund

Dear Co-chair Ruiz, Co-chair Sollman, and members of the committee:

Oregon's seven public universities, through the Oregon Council of Presidents (OCOP), offer their strong support for funding the Oregon Community College Support Fund at \$920 million.

Community colleges are essential to Oregon's educational infrastructure and valued partners to Oregon's public universities. They offer flexible learning opportunities for students of all ages and backgrounds, serving as a critical step in career advancement and an essential gateway to Oregon's public universities. Every year, thousands of community college students are co-enrolled or transfer to a university to pursue a four-year degree.

Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries reports that 48 of the projected top 50 high-demand, high-wage occupations require postsecondary education for applicants to be competitive. By investing in post-secondary education, you are investing in the future of our workforce and, ultimately, the prosperity of our state.

Oregon's community colleges have a proven track record of success. By funding these institutions, you are not only enhancing the educational opportunities available to our residents but also driving economic development and social equity throughout the state.

Oregon's public universities urge you to invest in all aspects of Oregon's post-secondary education landscape, including the Community College Support Fund. It is an investment in our collective future that will yield significant returns for our state and its residents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kevin Neely", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Kevin Neely
Interim Executive Director
Oregon Council of Presidents