

Co-Chair Sollmon, Co-Chair Ruiz and members of the Joint Subcommittee on Education:

My name is Michael Bondi. I live in Lake Oswego. I retired in 2022 following a 44-year career with Oregon State University. I am writing to ask your full support to the OSU Statewide Public Services budget request of \$207.2 million to maintain current programs and build capacity with focused integrated research and Extension efforts in critical areas identified by communities and our coalition of stakeholders throughout the state.

My experience as a County Extension Agent in Oregon for more than 30 years (North Coast and Portland metropolitan area), followed by years as a Regional Administrator for the OSU Extension Service and as the Director at the North Willamette Research and Extension Center serving the needs of our farming community, provides me with a broad and unique understanding of the significance of our education and research programs and the impacts they have on the people of Oregon.

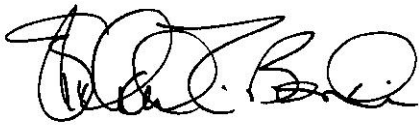
Key for your consideration are these points:

- Research has documented the high rate of payback from OSU's research and Extension programs—in excess of \$25 of return for citizens and communities for every dollar the state invests in these programs. We are an incredibly huge bang for your buck—especially important in times like these when dollars are tight.
- Our programs are designed by local people and delivered in the communities who have the need for information and knowledge to solve their problems and issues. OSU can do this most effectively because we have our faculty and staff embedded in counties throughout the state—and that's what makes us effective. No other university has a network of faculty and staff positioned throughout the state like this.
- The impacts of our OSU Statewide Public Services programs have been incredible over years. Working with farmers around Oregon, we have helped build entirely new industries in this state. Examples include: Christmas trees, grass seed, nursery crops, berries, and hazelnuts in years gone by and today doing the same with agrivoltics, cross laminated timber, and industrial hemp—just to name a few.
- Our youth development programs in 4-H and with Outdoor School Education are considered models across the U.S. and are the envy of most other states. And, our family and community health programs address citizen's needs and questions with research-based information and practical solutions—again, right in their communities.
- Although we have a network of faculty and staff deployed statewide conducting practical research and solving local problems, the real energy to these programs lies in the 10,000+ trained OSU volunteers who we have the opportunity to work with each year. From Master Gardeners to Master Woodland Owners, Master

Naturalists, Master Food Preservers and 4-H Leaders across this state, their service of being our conduits for the latest research and science-based information extends our reach in ways not possible in any other way.

It is vital to maintain the OSU Statewide Public Services programs of the OSU Extension Service, Agricultural Experiment Station, and Forest Research Laboratory at the full-funding level of \$207.2 million for the coming budget cycle. This budget amount will allow OSU to simply keep programs whole for the coming biennium and enable us to continue meeting the needs of Oregonians throughout the state.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael C. Bondi". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Michael" being more prominent than the last name "Bondi".

Michael C. Bondi, Professor Emeritus, College of Forestry