

Submitter: Kim Morgan
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5525

Co-Chairs Sollman and Ruiz and Fellow Members of the Committee:

My name is Kim Morgan and I currently serve as Board Chair for Columbia Gorge Community College, and reside in The Dalles, Oregon. As an eight year member of the board for CGCC, I have seen the tremendous impact community colleges have in transforming student's lives, economic development with local businesses and the safety net communities need during challenging times. I am proud to support SB 5525 and urge you to fully support Oregon's Community Colleges with the full funding amount of \$920 million dollars.

As a provider of educational degrees and vocational training, community colleges are still the most accessible and affordable option for many students. Students who might otherwise struggle to find living wage employment opportunities or afford the higher costs of advanced degrees are met with the support and training that help remove the financial barriers they need to attain their potential in becoming successful with their chosen professions.

Programs such as Small Business Development Centers are creating businesses in Oregon's local communities, contributing to regional economic development and improving the tax base. Community education offers various programs such as lifesaving courses in CPR and first aid, or might reach that budding photographer who creates an inspiring photo, or the person who is wanting to learn a new language.

The broad spectrum of social impact is felt by so many of our residents. Several community colleges offer food pantries for not only our students but for entire communities. I have seen firsthand how our CGCC food pantry provided food during the pandemic to those who were affected by financial difficulties during that unprecedented time. This was particularly important as many of the region's pantries were closed due to social distancing limitations.

The return on investment our community colleges provide to the state of Oregon is vastly increased by your support to fully fund our ask of \$920 million dollars. I respectfully request you to consider supporting its passage.

Kind regards,

Kim Morgan
CGCC Chair-Board of Education