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Senator Janeen Sollman
Representative Ricki Ruiz
Co-Chairs of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Senate Bill 5525

Dear Senator Sollman, Representative Ruiz, and members of the Subcommittee on Education,

I am writing to express my support of SB 5525, which would appropriate moneys from the General Fund to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for funding the second biennium of the Oregon Cybersecurity Center of Excellence (OCCoE).

Federal funding freezes are creating a critical need for funding state programs now more than ever. Oregon's cost to citizens from cyber crime rose from \$78 million in 2022 to \$117 million in 2023, and costs in 2024 are expected to be at least \$150 million. At this unprecedented moment, state-led cybersecurity initiatives are of highest priority.

The most crucial cybersecurity needs of the state are as follows:

- Workforce development for public service
- Affordable Security Operations Center (SOC) services for public entities
- Public outreach and awareness

Two of OCCoE's arguably highest impact programs for addressing these needs are at risk of losing funding: the Professional Certificate in Building Cyber Resilience for government/tribal employees and leaders to increase cyber resilience in public organizations, and GenCyber Cyber Camps for high schoolers to develop interest and experience in pursuing cybersecurity degrees/careers.

OCCoE is also working to expand its low to no-cost SOC services at partnering universities/colleges, which addresses these needs two-fold by providing hands-on cybersecurity training to college students while serving public entities at affordable rates. However, significantly more resources are necessary to expand these services to meet the ever increasing demand.

Each of these programs are driving forces within OCCoE's cybersecurity workforce development initiatives and their decrease would be a monumental loss in the state's mandate to fulfill this



critical need for training professionals and increasing awareness to protect Oregonians from cyber crime.

I urge you to support SB 5525 to allocate the \$11.3 million requested to increase OCCoE's outreach to the state via these highly needed cybersecurity training and education programs for public services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Eric Bowman". The signature is stylized, with the first name "Eric" written in a cursive-like script and the last name "Bowman" in a more formal, slightly cursive script.

Eric Bowman, Principal
Deloitte & Touche LLP