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Joint Committee on Capital Construction

Oregon State Legislature

900 Court St. NE

Salem, OR 97301

RE: Letter of Support for Western Oregon University's \$1.4 Million Article F Bond Request

Dear Co-Chairs and Members of the Joint Committee on Capital Construction,

On behalf of the players, coaches, families, and alumni involved in lacrosse at West Salem High School I am writing to express our strong support for Western Oregon University's (WOU) \$1.4 million Article F Bond Request. Funding the crucial improvements to WOU's recreation and field infrastructure has impacts well beyond the campus but to the broader community and region. We are proof of that.

Turf field space for youth athletics is incredibly limited in the Willamette Valley. Our lacrosse team has a diverse group of 40 student athletes, however we are still a club sport. We must pay for our field times at high schools and must wait for other high school sports to complete their practices. But not for the turf field at WOU - and the University's commitment to the community - the student athletes on our lacrosse team would have little to no opportunity to practice, play games, or host regional clinics without substantial cost or travel to cities like Wilsonville or Eugene. We have found that our club—like many others—offers a pathway for students from all backgrounds, to find connection and purpose through participation in our sport. As you know, playing a high school sport contributes toward student retention, wellness, and leadership development—key pillars of a vibrant community.

In this sense, the investment you are considering represents more than a campus upgrade. It is a commitment to local youth, regional economic activity, and promoting community engagement by WOU to the sports teams and their families in the nearby the Willamette Valley. Time spent on campus also raises the awareness of our high school athletes of a nearby, accessible, and top-notch academic institution.

Students and community users deserve safe environments to recreate, train and compete. And we can say that is more than just the WOU student body that benefits from increased campus vibrancy from this investment, local, youth sports benefits also.

In short, this bond request is a strategic investment in both WOU and the long-term vitality of the surrounding community. The West Salem High School Lacrosse Club urges your full support for this proposal and appreciate your continued commitment to Oregon's public institutions and rural communities.

We believe this bond represents an investment in the student experience and the future of Western Oregon University. We respectfully urge your support.

Sincerely,
Jean-Pierre Batmale
Board President
West Salem High School Lacrosse Club