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October 29, 2018

The Honorable Kate Brown  
Governor, State of Oregon  
Office of the Governor  
900 Court Street, Suite 254  
Salem, OR 97301-4047

Dear Governor Brown:

I am transmitting a funding proposal, approved on October 26, by the Oregon State University (OSU) Board of Trustees. We are seeking a \$30 million increase over the current appropriation for the OSU "Statewides" – the Extension Service, Agricultural Experiment Station, and Forest Research Laboratory.

As you may recall, earlier this year the Board of Trustees endorsed a consolidated funding request submitted by the public universities to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission. The request included a \$7.5 million funding increase for the Statewides in order to meet a narrow definition of the "continued service level" for these programs. At that time, the Board asked the Statewides to engage with program supporters across the state to identify the challenges and opportunities facing Oregon's natural resource industries as well as the state's public health, environmental, and conservation interests, all of whom have historically joined together in a well-established coalition in support of these vital programs.

As you know, during the 2015 session, the legislature approved a \$14 million increase for the Statewides that resulted in the hiring of 34 scientists, researchers, and outreach specialists distributed across the state to provide solutions to problems facing Oregonians in both rural and urban settings. We know these programs work. Our water is cleaner, our children are more successful, and our forest and agricultural industries are more productive.

Unfortunately, the benefits resulting from this funding increase were diminished during the 2017 session when the legislature approved a budget for the Statewides that did not meet their continuing, state-mandated cost increases, most of which are driven by employee retirement and health benefits.

The attached information identifies the decade of shortfalls that have plagued these programs. It also identifies potential initiatives for sustaining and revitalizing Oregon's rural and urban economic, social, and environmental attributes. These efforts are broadly aimed at the effective use of pesticides and integrated pest management, maintaining water quality, adopting technological advances to increase natural resource productivity, addressing pressing mental health challenges, and advancing our ability to promote communities and ecosystems that are wildfire-resilient.

I would appreciate your consideration of this funding request as you develop your recommended budget for the 2019-21 biennium. Over the coming months, as we approach the 2019 legislative session, we will continue to work with the broad coalition of Statewides supporters who rely on these programs for protecting and utilizing Oregon's vast and distinctive environmental and economic potential.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly with questions or concerns regarding the Board's actions and our efforts to advance Oregon's economic, social and environmental sustainability.

Sincerely,



Edward J. Ray  
President

Enclosure