



Governor Kate Brown
Office of the Governor
900 Court St NE
Salem, OR 97301

September 28, 2018

Dear Governor Brown,

We are writing on behalf of the students and faculty at Oregon State University and Oregon State University-Cascades. As you know, last month the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) submitted an Agency Request Budget for Oregon's public universities that included a \$186 million increase in the Public University Support Fund (PUSF) for a total of \$923 million for the 2019-21 biennium. We enthusiastically support this increase recommended to you by gubernatorial appointees who spent the last year considering the challenges facing Oregon's universities and the students who attend them.

Adopting the HECC's recommended budget is the single most important step you can take to create upward mobility for thousands of Oregonians. You can stem tuition increases while also reducing the staggering debtload that many students face when they graduate with a degree. The HECC's recommended budget not only will keep tuition increases below 5 percent – it will enable increased investments in student services, advising, and other programs that will both increase retention and the time to graduation.

A recommended budget that does not cover the very real state-mandated cost increases that all universities must pay, will simply continue to shift the burden of a college education onto the shoulders of students who are least able to bear this burden.

All seven University presidents have indicated that without an increase of at least \$130 million, for a total investment of \$867 million, universities will not be able to hold tuition below a 5 percent increase. We face the danger of either or both significant, double-digit, tuition increases and disruptive and unacceptable budget reductions. Most harmed in this process are students who are simply seeking to help create and realize a better future for Oregon.

Our hope is to work with you in supporting more funding and more revenues needed to enable us to continue to teach and learn. As students, we have faced a life-time of a broken revenue system in Oregon. As faculty, we have faced two decades of a declining state share of funding for public education. Please consider your recommended budget as a first step to setting the tone for the 2019 legislative session. Oregon can do better than continuing to shift the burden of a university education onto the shoulders of students and their families. Please adopt the HECC recommended budget.

Sincerely,

Justin Bennett
President
Associated Students of OSU

Jon Dorbolo
President
OSU Faculty Senate

Reilly King
President
Associated Students of Cascades Campus