



American Association of University Professors

Academic Freedom for a Free Society

April 17, 2017

Co-Chair Monroe, Co-Chair Smith Warner
Members of the Ways and Means Joint Subcommittee on Education
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Re: SB 5524 – Higher Education Budget: Support

Co-Chair Monroe, Co-Chair Smith Warner, and members of the Committee,

My name is José Padín. I am a professor at Portland State University, where I've taught for 20 years. I am president of the Oregon State Conference of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP-Oregon). Thank you for your service to our state, and thank you for the opportunity to speak with you today.

On behalf of the more than 3400 members of the American Association of University Professors in Oregon, our collective bargaining faculty chapters at the University of Oregon and Portland State University, and our faculty members across Oregon, I am here to ask that you please support Oregon's future by securing more robust funding for our Higher Education System.

The current funding level in SB 5524 falls roughly \$275 million short of what the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) requested to move our state, albeit gradually, towards its 40-40-20 goals. The *HECC's request of \$943 million constitutes a prudent, long-term investment in Oregon's future.*

SB 5524 also falls \$100 million short of what Oregon public universities need just to maintain current services levels, with tuition increases that will (research shows) take a toll on college completion rates. 40-40-20 is the strategic vision for Oregon. Yet, a HECC study of Oregon high school graduates finds that only 22% ever complete college (The national average is over 31%). We have a long way to go towards the 40-40-20 goals. The emergency request of \$100 million from the Universities can only maintain the status quo, which is very discouraging for all of us committed to 40-40-20. *It is urgent that we approve a higher education budget that is closer to the HECC's request if we are to make any progress towards our state goals.*

We ask that you please support Oregon's future by passing a more robust funding package for Oregon's university system than is currently found in SB 5524. We know this will not be easy, but it is imperative if we are to attempt to meet our 40-40-20 goals and continue to move Oregon forward as a state.

Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "José Padín". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a long, sweeping underline.

José Padín, Ph.D.
President