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Sent: Friday, June 24, 2016 3:50 PM
To: 'ben.cannon@state.or.us'
Cc: Lita Colligan; Alex Hassen (alex.hassen@poweroregon.org)
Subject: OIT Oregon Renewable Energy Center (OREC)

Date: 6/24/16

Higher Education Coordinating Commission c/o Ben Cannon, Executive Director
775 Court St. NE
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Dear Members of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission,

Power Oregon is a non-profit research and policy initiative with a mission to facilitate public/private partnerships that will firmly establish Oregon as a center of excellence for clean energy, energy conservation, and innovation in energy technologies. We believe that Oregon has a unique position in the clean energy arena including:

- Conservation
- Smart Grid
- Renewable Power Generation
- Power Technology Application

The Power Oregon Directors have broad experience in government, industry, policy planning, finance, and academia. From the outset, Power Oregon www.poweroregon.org engaged senior industry leaders, public officials, educators, economic experts, and policy consultants to consider the best way for Oregon to align the private sector with higher education to help Oregon's advanced energy business sector sustain its recent growth. In addition to its own studies, Power Oregon commissions/collaborates on research papers designed to assist policy makers with investment priorities <http://www.poweroregon.org/history.php#publications> .

We are writing to express Power Oregon's support for Oregon Tech and the Oregon Renewable Energy Center (OREC) as they seek state support through a Policy Option Package to fulfill their mandate in ORS 352.221 to "engage in renewable energy system engineering and applied research." It is our view that the OREC stands to be a key driver in establishing Oregon as an internationally recognized center of excellence for clean energy, energy conservation, and innovation in energy technologies and that maintaining the momentum OIT/OREC have initiated is critical.

As a Power Oregon Director, I have participated on the OREC Task Force at Oregon Tech over the past year to envision OREC's future, research its unique niche in the applied research energy market and focus its mission and strategic advantages. One finding during my tenure on the committee is that energy companies want more than just applied research partners. They want faculty and students at the undergraduate and graduate level to complete their degrees with solid academic preparation, complemented by real-world, applied research experiences working with industry on projects. OREC fills this gaps and has been doing it without direct state support.

Now is the time for the state to fulfill its part of the bargain and provide some sustaining funds so this unique applied research center can do more than limp from grant to grant, and find a way to sustain its technical assistance, applied clean tech research and strong talent development mission.

Power Oregon unequivocally supports funding for OREC as one of the university system's public purpose State Programs to make more clean tech expertise and talent available to Oregon companies.

Thank you for your consideration of Oregon Tech's Policy Option Package request.

Sincerely,

Josh Bratt

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