Klamath County Commissioners

Tom Mallams, *Commissioner*
Position One

Kelley Minty Morris, *Commissioner*
Position Two

Jim Bellet, *Commissioner*
Position Three

June 20, 2016

Higher Education Coordinating Commission
c/o Ben Cannon, Executive Director
775 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301
ben.cannon@state.or.us

Subject: Support for Oregon Tech's Center for Excellence in Engineering and Technology / Cornett Renovation, Phase 2

Dear Members of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission:

We are writing on behalf of the Klamath Falls community to express our support for Oregon Tech's capital construction project: The Center for Excellence in Engineering and Technology/Cornett Hall Renovation. We feel it is of utmost importance to attract, retain, grow and start companies in rural Klamath County. We view Oregon Tech as a critical element in our economic development strategy and as a great talent development engine for rural Oregon.

The Klamath County Economic Development Association works closely with the university as part of Team Klamath to recruit and retain companies. Klamath IDEA works closely with Oregon Tech on the Catalyze Klamath Falls Challenge to encourage student and faculty start-ups and to keep highly skilled talent in Klamath Falls. South Central Oregon Economic Development District includes Oregon Tech in its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. And the Klamath Chamber of Commerce views Oregon Tech as a vital community partner, and encourages the growth of its rural member companies through commerce with Oregon Tech. According to a recent Economic Impact Analysis by EcoNorthwest, our Klamath community benefits from $75M in total annual output in Klamath County from Oregon Tech.

We can tell you the Center for Excellence in Engineering and Technology/Cornett Hall Renovation will greatly benefit our community, contribute to local jobs, and attract and keep students in our community who will become the next generation of employees, business

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owners, and inventors. We need this integrated Center for Engineering that expands the interdisciplinary School of Engineering, Technology and Management. The growth of engineering and technology programs and applied student-faculty research and industry and community-supported projects will greatly enhance the campus and improve the student experience. Construction and renovation of both facilities will account for approximately 364 jobs. We hope many of those jobs will be in Klamath Falls.

We are involved with Oregon Tech because we want to harness our community's resources, both financial and human, to grow jobs and talent in Oregon.

We encourage you to support the Center for Excellence in Engineering and Technology / Cornett Hall Renovation, and urge you to ensure that Oregon Tech's Center for Excellence in Engineering and Technology is ranked high on the prioritized list.

Engineering education is critical to the economic development of the state, the success of our regional businesses, and to our kids who need meaningful, well-paying jobs in rural Klamath Falls and in Oregon.

Thank you in advance for your support of Oregon Tech and its capital construction priorities.

Sincerely,

Tom Mallams
Commissioner

Kelley Minty Morris
Chair

Jim Bellet
Commissioner

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