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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Governor's Recommended Budget keeps community college funding flat

SALEM, Ore. – Oregon Governor Kate Brown on Tuesday (Dec. 1, 2020) released the Governor's Recommended Budget (GRB) for the 2021-23 biennium, which includes the same funding allocation of \$640.9 million for community colleges it received for 2019-21.

Community colleges need \$702 million to maintain their Current Service Level and keep tuition increases to 3.5% or below on average statewide. That's about \$61 million shy of what the Governor has recommended.

"We recognize the budgetary hardships every sector of state government has experienced due to COVID-19 and the devastating wildfires, and can appreciate the difficult choices the Governor had to make with the revenue available," said Dr. Cam Preus, Executive Director of the Oregon Community College Association. "However, as Oregon's workforce training experts, community colleges are critical to the state's economic and family recovery. Adequate funding to support the colleges is vital to reviving the state's workforce."

Community colleges made significant adjustments to how they provided education and training to students when the Governor prohibited in-person instruction in March due to COVID-19. The colleges performed Herculean tasks of moving hands-on Career-Technical Education (CTE) training programs and other in-person services online, while continuing to support students' basic needs, including food and access to the Internet. When the destructive wildfires further damaged the state's communities, community colleges continued to adjust to support local families and industries, including providing emergency shelters and producing food through agriculture programs. During the state's economic downturn and increased workload on healthcare and emergency responders, community colleges trained frontline workers to help ease the load.

In a Tuesday briefing with media, Governor Brown indicated she was disappointed she could not recommend increased funding for higher education, and called community colleges Oregon's "workhorses" because of their impact on the state's economy and ability to train necessary workers.

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