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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Legislature approves Community College Support Fund, capital construction

SALEM, Ore. – Both chambers of the Oregon Legislature approved HB 5025 earlier today (June 23), the agency budget for the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), which includes funding for Oregon’s 17 community colleges and state-based financial aid. The Community College Support Fund (CCSF) will receive \$800 million for the 2023-25 biennium, an increase of \$97 million over what was allocated in 2021-23.

HB 5025 also includes a \$100 million increase to the Oregon Opportunity Grant, the state’s primary need-based financial aid program, bringing that budget to \$308.4 million for the next biennium. The Oregon Tribal Student Grant was also funded on a continuing basis at \$24.2 million.

“Enrollments are on the rise at Oregon’s community colleges, and this boost in funding will aid our colleges in serving students and also provide greater accessibility to aspiring Oregonians pursuing affordable higher education through enhanced financial aid programs,” said Karen Smith, the Interim Executive Director of the Oregon Community College Association (OCCA), which advocates on behalf of the colleges in the Legislature. “Although this significant increase marks a positive stride forward, it remains insufficient to fully meet the colleges’ genuine requirements in supporting students and communities at their current level of service.”

Following the pandemic, there has been a robust demand among students re-enrolling in Oregon's community colleges for short-term Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. As such, colleges require financial assistance to effectively address these demands and cater to the needs of both students and industries.

The Legislature’s allocation of a total of \$73.9 million for community college capital construction projects in HB 5005 will assist in some of these areas by providing the funds needed for projects that will support programs important to colleges’ communities. These projects include:

### NEW PROJECTS

- Lane Community College – Science, Math, Engineering Building Renovation (\$8M)
- Southwestern Oregon Community College – SUCCESS Project Building Remodels (\$8M)
- Columbia Gorge Community College – The Dalles/Hood River Facility Renovations (\$5.5M)
- Umpqua Community College – Welcome Center & Medical Careers Training Hub (\$8M)
- Portland Community College – Rock Creek Building 2 Complex (\$8M)

(MORE)



## REAUTHORIZATIONS

- Central Oregon Community College – Redmond Campus Renovation & Expansion (\$4M)
- Chemeketa Community College – Building 7 Remodel (\$8M)
- Clatsop Community College – Maritime Science Center (\$7.9M)
- Klamath Community College – Child Care Learning Complex (\$1.5M)
- Oregon Coast Community College – Center for Trades Education (\$8M)
- Rogue Community College – Technology Transportation Complex (\$7M)

“We appreciate that our legislators recognize the capital construction needs of our institutions that meet the demands of local industries and support student success,” Smith said. “The capital construction projects that community colleges undertake are crucial for enhancing facility safety and security, providing student support, and ensuring that the facilities and equipment are in line with the needs of local industries for workforce training.”

Both HB 5025 and HB 5005 now head to the Governor’s desk for signature, along with SB 523, which allows community colleges to offer Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) degrees. An increase to the CCSF and Oregon Opportunity Grant, along with the passage of SB 523 were OCCA’s three priorities going into the 2023 Legislative Session.

“OCCA is proud to have accomplished all three of its priorities for the Session,” Smith said. “We are grateful to the numerous community college presidents, board members, faculty, staff, students, and other community partners and stakeholders who dedicated considerable time and effort to championing these priorities and various other initiatives throughout the Session, all in support of community colleges.”

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*The Oregon Community College Association (OCCA) represents the 17 publicly chartered community colleges and their locally elected board members in Oregon. Founded in 1962, OCCA’s purpose is to support the colleges before policy-makers and partners whose actions affect the well-being of community colleges across the state.*