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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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# Oregon's Community Colleges Receive \$854.4M in State Funding — A Step Forward, But Challenges Remain

SALEM, Ore. – The Legislature has approved \$854.4 million for Oregon's Community College Support Fund (CCSF) in SB 5525 for the 2025–27 biennium — a 6.9% increase from the previous cycle but well below the \$920 million needed to sustain programs, services, and rising student enrollment.

“We deeply appreciate the Legislature’s continued support of community colleges,” said Dr. Abby Lee, Executive Director of OCCA. “However, this funding level does not fully meet student and workforce needs. Without additional investment, many colleges will face cuts to course offerings, support services, and workforce training — impacting Oregon’s long-term economic goals.”

Community colleges are seeing increased demand for programs in healthcare, advanced manufacturing, and behavioral health. With funding stagnant at the Governor’s Recommended Budget, many colleges will struggle to maintain workforce pipelines and will be forced to raise tuition.

“Oregon’s community colleges remain committed to meeting the state’s needs,” said OCCA Board President Austin Fohnagy. “But without stronger investment, it becomes harder to deliver essential programs and services.”

Legislators did restore funding for benefits navigators, ensuring students can access support services. The budget also allocates \$329.4 million to the Oregon Opportunity Grant — far short of the \$450 million OCCA and higher education partners advocated for student financial aid.

OCCA continues to urge legislative support for HB 3635, which would increase the cap on Article XI-G bond funding from the \$8 million-cap, set in 2006, to \$15 million reflecting the cost of inflation since then. This would allow community colleges to pursue much-needed infrastructure investments.

OCCA also encourages approval of HB 5505, which would authorize Article XI-G bond funding for five community college capital construction projects, including:

- Reauthorization of funds for Clatsop Community College and Southwestern Oregon Coast Community College projects, ensuring completion of previously approved projects.
- New projects at Clackamas, Klamath, and Mt. Hood Community Colleges, expanding and modernizing buildings to better serve students and address workforce needs.

OCCA remains committed to working with legislators and stakeholders to ensure Oregon's 17 community colleges can continue delivering high-quality, accessible education that strengthens the state's future.

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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.*