

## Senate reinvests in higher education

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Budget is an \$87 million increase over Essential Budget Level

SALEM, Ore. - The Oregon Senate yesterday passed Senate Bill 5515, the budget for Oregon's higher education system. The bill is the beginning of a reinvestment in Oregon's higher education system, which has been devastated by cuts from the previous recession. The budget will increase funding for enrollment growth, regional institutions and faculty salaries.

"We have a long way to go to rebuild Oregon's higher education system," said Senator Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin). "This budget is a big step forward in doing better for Oregon's colleges and universities."

Funding for higher education has seen a steady decline in Oregon in recent years due to difficult economic times. Because of the decline in funding, tuition has gone up and courses have been reduced or eliminated. Quality faculty has also been on the decline due to low salaries as compared to other states. Senate Bill 5515 will dedicate \$46 million to enrollment growth and \$10 million to increase faculty salaries. The budget will also include \$9 million for Oregon's regional universities.

“We hope to reverse the trend of disinvestment with this budget,” said Senator Ginny Burdick (D-Portland). “We are committed to continuing to build higher education in Oregon.”

Senate Bill 5515 will now move to the House for consideration.

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