

## **Government Relations Update for February 2013**

---

### **Building Champions for Oregon Tech**

Oregon Tech is off to a great start this year with advocacy for our priorities with legislators in Salem. Over the past three months, President Maples has invited legislators for tours and briefings at the Wilsonville Campus, to say “thank you” for your support, show legislators how we are investing the state’s dollars, and promote our legislative agenda for 2013. His message is loud and clear: Oregon Tech is one university - Two campuses. We offer highly ranked, rigorous educational programs. Oregon Tech offers the best ROI in the state for both the student and state investment.

To date, legislators, local elected officials, and other influencers who have toured the building include: State Representatives John Davis (R-Wilsonville), Margaret Doherty (D-Tigard), Mitch Greenlick (D-Portland), Bruce Hanna (R-Roseberg), Mark Johnson (R-Hood River), Bill Kennemer (R-Oregon City), Betty Komp (D-Woodburn) , Julie Parrish (R-Tualatin), Sherrie Sprenger (R-Scio), Jessica Vega Pederson (D-West Portland), Gail Whitsett (R-Klamath Falls) and State Senators Richard Devlin (D-Tualatin), Jackie Dingfelder (D-Portland), Larry George (R-Sherwood) Doug Whitsett (R-Klamath Falls), plus Wilsonville Mayor Tim Knapp, Wilsonville City Councilors Susie Stevens, Julie Fitzgerald, and Richard Goddard; as well as Duncan Wyse, President of the Oregon Business Council.



**State Representative John Davis**

## Focus on Budget and Fiscal Priorities

Oregon Tech is advocating for the following budget items:

- \$10M in F bonds to complete the financing for the Wilsonville Campus (has been included in the Governor's list of priorities);
- \$2M for feasibility studies including: Environmental site assessment and conceptual design for either renovation or replacement of Cornett Hall; Facilities Master Plan; Facility studies for Boivin, Semon, Purvine and other buildings on the Klamath Falls Campus;
- OUS budget: Governor's Balanced Budget recommendation as a floor; advocating for higher state funding;
- Sports Action Lottery: reinstating these funds in the budget (approximately \$300,000 for Oregon Tech).

## University Governance Bills

Two bills of note related to university governance are SB270 and HB 2149 which would establish institutional boards for University of Oregon and Portland State University and criteria for other universities to be considered for an institutional board. In a hearing on SB270 on Feb 7<sup>th</sup>, the Senate Education and Workforce Development Committee heard testimony from Chancellor Pernsteiner, Representative Dembrow and State Board of Higher Education President, Matt Donegan, in support of the bill. The Chancellor asked the committee to take into consideration these four conditions in their deliberations on the bill:



Chancellor George Pernsteiner

- Public oversight—the state must retain some levers to help influence public universities to meet state needs and goals.
- Participation in a shared enterprise that connects universities and reduces costs to students.

- Regional institutions must be sustained and viable to ensure social and geographic equity.
- The role of philanthropy - changes in the system must lead to greater private investment.

At this point, it looks like SB270 be amended to authorize institutional boards for each of the large universities, including Oregon State University. In conversations with legislators, they indicated an interest in establishing a working group to thoughtfully determine the most advantageous governance structure for the four small universities, which could include separate institutional boards, or a “consortium” board for the four small universities. President Maples is talking to legislators about Oregon Tech’s statewide mission, its uniqueness as the Northwest’s only polytechnic university, and the higher cost of delivering STEM programs. He is also advocating that Oregon Tech or a representative have a place at the table when the working group convenes so that the impact of any future governance changes on Oregon Tech can be adequately addressed.

### Other Bills of Interest

**Tuition Equity:** HB2787 will ensure that graduates of Oregon high schools who are undocumented students have the opportunity to attend an Oregon public university and pay in-state tuition at any OUS institution. Eligible students must attend elementary or secondary school in Oregon for at least three years before getting a diploma, or equivalent, and intend to become a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States. All the OUS presidents have signed a letter of support for HB2787. This bill has a high likelihood of passage.



**STEM Partnership Event at Mentor Graphics**  
Photo credit: Wilsonville Spokesman

**STEM Investments:** HB2636 recommends establishing a STEM Council to advise the OEIB and a STEM Fund to invest in STEM education programs in K12, colleges and universities. Oregon Tech could receive grants from this fund, if it is authorized.

For more information, contact the Office of Strategic Partnerships and Government Relations  
Lita Colligan, Associate Vice President  
503-821-1247  
Lita.colligan@oit.edu