March 25, 2014

Matthew Donegan President, Oregon State Board of Higher Education
Directors, Oregon State Board of Higher Education
c/o Chancellor’s Office
PO Box 751
Portland, OR 97207-0751

Dear President Donegan and Directors,

Western Oregon University has requested an Independent Institutional Board. I support this request.

The deliberations involving Oregon Higher Education Governance have been difficult and painful. Oregon, by executive and legislative action, is changing how it governs its seven public universities. The Institutional Independent Board is foremost among those changes.

Western Oregon University is the oldest by far of the seven institutions. She has had her ups and downs. I have worked for this school for almost 30 years. I never thought I would be able to say this, but Western Oregon University is stronger than at any time in my tenure there and perhaps in her 158 year history. She is stronger in all critical areas.

Enrollment
Curriculum
Faculty
Administration
Infrastructure
Business Plan
Reserves
Master Plan

900 Court St. NE, S-201, Salem, Oregon 97301
(503) 386-1600
If ever there was a time for an Independent Board for this university, it is now. There are obvious risks. President Mark Weiss and his administration understand these risks. They have to find a group of men and women who can make Western Oregon University permanently stable and sustainable. It won’t be easy.

But the school is strong, very strong.

The administration is committed.

The time is right.

Western Oregon University should be granted an Independent Institutional Board.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

[Signature]

Senator Peter Courtney
President of the Senate