March 1, 2018

The Honorable Senator Peter Courtney, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Representative Nancy Nathanson, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Ways and Means

RE: AmeriCorps

Dear Co-Chair Courtney and Co-Chair Nathanson:

As Presidents of Oregon’s public universities, we encourage your strong support of AmeriCorps Oregon Volunteers programs. Participation in AmeriCorps programs expands the horizons of our students and alumni and meets critical needs in our communities. The state of Oregon should continue to support this important work.

Governor Brown is proposing the transfer of Oregon Volunteers from the Office of the Governor to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission. This shift will help guarantee Oregon Volunteers receives adequate staffing to meet the match requirements for AmeriCorps.

Nearly 500 AmeriCorps members are serving communities across the state. They are tutoring children, coordinating volunteers, and performing an array of critical public facing tasks all with the goal of improving our communities. In the current biennium this work has leveraged $6.9 million for our state.

Affordability is a challenge for students at Oregon universities and at institutions throughout the nation as costs outpace state investments. As a result, the onus of paying for higher education falls to students and their families. AmeriCorps provides opportunities for members to earn an education award that can be used to pay back educational loans giving students additional and needed financial resources.

Please join us in continuing to support Oregon Volunteers and AmeriCorps work in Oregon and its benefit to the next generation of leaders.

Sincerely,

Thomas Insko  
President  
Eastern Oregon University

Michael Schill  
President  
University of Oregon

Rex Fuller  
President  
Western Oregon University