

Senate Resolution – June 3rd, 2008

The Oregon State Legislature established a State Salary Pool in 2007 to enable state agencies to cover salary increases over the 2007-09 biennium. Under guidance from Governor Kulongoski, state agencies, including the Oregon University System, have already raised salaries based on this pool.

The Legislature subsequently chose not to release these funds during the February 2008 supplemental session because of concerns about a potential revenue shortfall. Budget leaders said they would wait until the June 2008 revenue forecast before deciding whether to release the funds. With contracts already in place, salaries will not be affected by a decision to withhold these funds but there are negative impacts that will be felt by all OUS institutions.


Withholding these funds will:

- force OUS institutions to reduce classes offered and raise tuition. This will lead to reduced enrollment and lower graduation rates at a time when Oregon needs more college graduates to compete effectively in the global economy.
- reverse the gains made by OUS in the last legislative session which would help to restore the losses from earlier biennia. This will further damage the fragile financial health of OUS institutions particularly the regional campuses that have already undergone severe retrenchment.
- weaken the system's ability to attract and retain high-achieving students and recruit and retain top-quality faculty.
- impede Oregon Institute of Technology's expansion of healthcare and renewable energy education, both of which provide critically needed, highly skilled graduates who help drive Oregon's economy and enhance our quality of life.

Whereas the failure to release the State Salary Pool funds in June 2008 would cause unnecessary and undue hardship for Oregon's students and would erode the ability of the Oregon University System to provide the education needed to ensure a more secure future for all Oregonians, the Oregon Institute of Technology Faculty Senate urges the Governor and the Oregon Legislature to take all necessary steps to secure the timely release of these funds.

Passed by the OIT Faculty Senate on June 3rd, 2008

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Mark Neupert, Faculty Senate President