

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 19, 2018

The Honorable Wilbur L. Ross, Jr.  
United States Secretary of Commerce  
1401 Constitution Ave., N.W.  
Washington, DC 20230

RE: Oregon Institute of Technology EDA Application (CAGE code 1QZC0)

Dear Secretary Ross,

We write in support of the application submitted by Oregon Institute of Technology (Oregon Tech) to the Economic Development Administration for \$3 million to retrofit the Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center's Research and Development Center (OMIC R&D Center). OMIC is a transformative economic development project that will create good jobs, foster innovation in manufacturing, and equip workers and students for success in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century economy.

The OMIC R&D Center is a partnership of three first-class research universities—Oregon Tech, Oregon State University, and Portland State University—with 15 industry members seeking innovation in manufacturing and highly-trained workers. Interest in the OMIC R&D Center is growing among industries. This public-private partnership will reinforce and expand our state's leadership in the advanced manufacturing sector and create new growth opportunities. American strength in advanced manufacturing is a key to our world leadership and ongoing economic vitality.

By bringing together industry leaders and higher education institutions to develop work-based learning programs and cutting-edge industry solutions, the OMIC R&D Center will be the beating heart of a new innovation district. The district will include Portland Community College's Training Center, where students and prospective workers will receive post-secondary training in advanced manufacturing. The district will be a center for economic development and research, attracting new businesses, supporting emerging industries, and spurring growth at existing Oregon businesses.

OMIC has already secured significant resources and the long-term commitments necessary to provide stability for economic development well into the future. The State of Oregon has provided a strong foundation for OMIC with \$16 million in funding. Industry and university partners have also invested significant resources and committed to ongoing support for at least five years. Oregon Tech has invested \$1.7 million in the R&D Center and secured \$3.94 million in bonds. With an EDA award of \$3 million, Oregon Tech is poised to retrofit the R&D building to welcome the industry partners, researchers, and students who are waiting to walk through the doors. The building requires major investments to serve its future purpose, including electrical

upgrades, strengthening of the concrete foundation to support large equipment, water and sewer upgrades, temperature control, and adjustments for ADA compliance, fire, and safety.

OMIC is a tremendous opportunity for Oregonians, and exactly the kind of public-private partnership that brings value to our communities and the economy. We strongly support Oregon Tech's leadership in developing the OMIC R&D Center. Oregon Tech has an excellent track record of providing hands-on education and creating real-world solutions since 1947. Please give Oregon Tech's application your full and fair consideration.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



Jeff Merkley  
United States Senator



Ron Wyden  
United States Senator



Peter DeFazio  
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



Greg Walden  
Member of Congress



Kurt Schrader  
Member of Congress

CC: A. Leonard Smith, Regional Director, EDA  
Angela Ewell-Madison, Congressional Affairs, EDA  
Shalini Bansal, Economic Development Specialist, EDA