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THIRD DISTRICT, OREGON

COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEES:

TRADE

SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-3703

NOTE: Signing onto this letter of support for a programmatic request DOES NOT need to be accompanied by a financial disclosure letter, or disclosed on the requesting Member's website. **However, all programmatic requests must be entered into the online LHHS appropriations database.**

March 6, 2009

Dear Colleague:

As America moves to tackle today's changing economy and changing world, our universities, businesses and citizens need tools to help them prepare for tomorrow's jobs. In light of these priorities, we ask you to join us in signing onto a programmatic funding request for the already authorized University Sustainability Programs in the fiscal year 2010 (FY10) Labor, Health and Human Services appropriations bill.

The University Sustainability Programs were authorized by Congress as part of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (PL 110-315, Title VIII, Part U). The Act authorizes funding for American colleges and universities to develop, implement and evaluate sustainability programs and practices. As population growth, urban development and extreme weather incidents place greater stress on ecosystems around the globe, the need for developing innovative and successful practices is critical to sustaining our economic competitiveness, environmental health and strong communities.

The University Sustainability Programs have been endorsed by over 25 organizations (including the American Council on Education, the American Association of Community Colleges and the American Association of State Colleges and Universities), 200 colleges and community colleges, and multiple non-governmental organizations and corporations. The attached letter requests \$50 million to initiate the program in FY10. We hope that you will join us in asking for support by signing the attached letter, and by making the University Sustainability Programs one of your programmatic requests that you submit online to the Higher Education subcommittee (no financial disclosure or Member website listing necessary).

If you have any questions, or to sign onto the letter, please contact Tyler.frisbee@mail.house.gov (Rep. Blumenauer) or Julia.Jester@mail.house.gov (Rep. Ehlers). **The deadline for signing on is March 18th, 2009.**

Sincerely,

Congressman Earl Blumenauer

Congressman Vernon J. Ehlers

March 6, 2009

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt,

On behalf of the thousands of higher education institutions, organizations, students, industry partners, faculty, and administrators throughout the nation who are committed to helping the United States find a pathway towards a more sustainable future, we respectfully request that you support a FY2010 appropriation of \$50 million for the University Sustainability Programs, a competitive grant program authorized as part of the Higher Education Opportunity Act (PL 110-315, Title VIII, Part U).

Each year, higher education sends over two million graduates into the workforce armed with the attitudes, skills, and knowledge to advance either a sustainable, green, clean energy economy - or to advance business as usual. The University Sustainability Programs competitive grants will help equip the coming generation of scientists, engineers, planners, and business professionals with the knowledge vital to meet the mounting global challenges that we face as a nation. As energy demands, population growth, and urban development place greater stress on our economic systems, the need for developing innovative, sustainable development practices is critical to growing our economic competitiveness, improving the health of our environment, and creating more livable communities. Higher education plays a pivotal role in meeting this need.

Many of our nation's higher education institutions are committed to developing sustainable practices and academic programs, but struggle to implement vital responses to pressing sustainability issues. This new program has received broad support across the country, including over 250 college and university presidents, several dozen national environmental and education organizations, and 25 major higher education associations, which collectively represent the majority of colleges and universities in the nation.

Investments in sustainability education are critical for short-term job creation as well as long-term economic growth. According to economist Dr. Robert Pollin, government spending on educational services generates significantly more jobs (23.1 jobs per \$1 million dollars in spending) than spending on almost any other sector (including public infrastructure spending). Public investment in sustainability education is a direct investment in America's competitiveness in the changing global marketplace. Funding the University Sustainability Programs will help colleges and universities equip a new generation of Americans, inspire them to tackle the future economic landscape, and pave the way for new technologies and industries that will drive the U.S. economy for decades to come.

We thank you for considering this important request.