

Governor Kate Brown
Semiconductor Task Force Testimony
House Interim Committee on Economic Development and Small Business
September 21, 2022

As prepared –

Good morning, for the record I'm Governor Kate Brown. Thank you Chair Bynum, co-chairs Cate and Lively, and members of the committee for inviting me today to speak about the importance of the semiconductor industry in Oregon.

The semiconductor industry is truly the heart and soul of Oregon's economy. Between the CHIPS Act and the Inflation Reduction Act, there are incredible opportunities if we work together to expand manufacturing and support our workforce.

I need your bipartisan support for the recommendations brought forward by the Oregon Semiconductor Competitiveness Task Force. The task force, which I co-chaired with Senator Wyden and PGE CEO Maria Pope, brought together representatives of industry, government, academics, and workforce to build consensus around a package that we can all support.

The reason I am so engaged in this work is because this is about creating prosperity for all Oregonians. The semiconductor sector can and should be instrumental in closing economic disparity gaps in this state. We were on track before the pandemic to close our economic gaps in this state. We can get back on track quickly by expanding job

opportunities and viable career pathways through the semiconductor industry.

Because we have laid the groundwork for workforce development with Future Ready Oregon, we can continue to invest in STEM education and build on existing partnerships—among industry, education, workforce, and community-based organizations—to meet the education and workforce needs of the industry. It's critical we ensure educational and job training opportunities are available to all historically underserved communities, so that no one is left behind.

Continuing to grow Oregon's Silicon Forest is about supporting working families. A thriving semiconductor industry needs a highly-skilled and educated workforce—an area where Oregon is currently a national leader, but we can't stop there. Jobs in the tech sector pay well and have low barriers to entry. These are jobs with career pathways. This will ensure the Silicon Forest has roots throughout all of Oregon.

We must act quickly. We are in a 50-state competition for CHIPS funding, so it is critical that we seize the opportunities in front of us now in the highly-competitive semiconductor industry. The good news is, creating jobs, building a strong workforce, and supporting Oregon families are Oregon values. Republicans and Democrats alike—and independents too—understand the importance of creating good-paying jobs.

I believe firmly that economic growth and environmental protections are not mutually exclusive. I've brought forward proposals around streamlining and expediting environmental permitting, based on my work chairing the task force's environmental regulatory subcommittee, to be considered by the E-Board.

And, I'm pleased to announce that I will be investing \$1 million from the Strategic Reserve Fund in industrial land readiness, so that we don't have to wait until the session for this important work to move forward. This investment will help local governments with site preparation planning, wetland mitigation assessment and begin the process to create an Industrial Lands Technical Assistance Grant Fund to help leverage CHIPS opportunities.

My goal is for us to work together to have a viable package for the Legislature to act on Day 1 of the session.

There is no time to waste. We have the opportunity now to position Oregon as *the* leading R+D state in the nation while reducing economic disparities, creating job opportunities, and growing our semiconductor industry.

Thank you.