

May 20, 2009

SLDC Staff, Task Force Members, Board Members, Advisors, Administrators, Students, Alumni, Parents, Business Partners and Judges:

On Monday, May 18th, the Joint committee on Ways and Means released their Co-Chairs 2009-11 Recommended Budget. In that budget, while other Grant-In-Aid programs are reduced, **funding to the Student Leadership Development Center (SLDC) is completely eliminated** (along with the funding for Chess and SMART).

While we recognize the difficulty facing legislators in the face of dramatically dwindling resources, it is clear that there is insufficient understanding about the vital role of our Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs) in Career and Technical Education in Oregon. The seven CTSOs of the SLDC are not clubs – they are an integral part of Career and Technical Education.

While the situation is very serious, it is important that we not give up!

We are encouraging *all* individuals involved with our CTSO's to immediately *contact both their own legislators and the co-chairs of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Senator Margaret Carter and Representative Peter Buckley*. This includes students, state officers, advisors, alumni, administrators, board members, state and local business partners, conference judges, parents, etc. Even if they have previously contacted legislators, we are asking them to do so again and continue advocacy until the final budget is approved. The "Final Note" of the Co-Chairs 2009-11 Recommended Budget states, *"Our budget is now the working document for the remainder of the 2009 session, and we look forward to hearings, discussions, negotiations, and completion of the budget process over the next few weeks."* We will respond definitively to this invitation to discuss and negotiate, throughout all seven of our organizations in a voice that loudly and clearly says, "We are too valuable to lose".

We encourage students and educators to *emphasize the integral nature of student organizations to Career and Technical Education, in preparing students for their next steps in education and career preparation, as well as helping them meet Oregon Diploma Requirements*. We encourage state and local business partners, judges, etc. to *emphasize the role of CTSOs in workforce development and the future of Oregon's economic recovery and continued economic development*.

Our plan is as follows:

- The SLDC Director will contact the **SLDC Task Force** to mobilize their efforts.
- Staff will contact all **advisors**, asking them contact their own legislators and to notify their administrators, student members, parents, local business partners, and local advisory boards of the elimination of SLDC funding, and encourage them to

contact both their own legislators and co-chairs Carter and Buckley with the recommended message, and urging continued funding.

- Staff will contact **board chairs** to make contact with all **board members** and ask them to contact legislators.
- Staff will contact **conference judge coordinators**, ask them to contact all **conference judges** and encourage them to contact both their own legislators and co-chairs Carter and Buckley.
- Staff will contact new and recently retired **state officers** and ask them to make personal contact with their legislators and co-chairs Carter and Buckley.
- Staff will contact all **state-level business partners** to notify them of the situation and enlist their support. Support staff can assist with these contacts, if needed.
- Staff will contact **alumni groups** to request their assistance.
- Staff will contact their organization **national office** to inform national staff of the situation in Oregon and the need for advocacy.
- Staff will make use of all available resources to enlist support, including **networking technology** such as Facebook and Twitter.
- **Efforts will continue until the SLDC is funded or the legislature adjourns.**

Thank you for your continued support and advocacy efforts on behalf of Oregon's students.

Sincerely,

Chris Rankin
Director
Student Leadership Development Center