



**To:** Senate Education Committee  
**From:** Pablo Saldana, Oregon community college student  
**Date:** March 19th, 2013  
**Re:** Testimony in Support of Tuition Equity

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Chair Hass and Members of the Committee:

Hello, my name is Pablo Saldana, and I am here today to ask for your support of Tuition Equity legislation. Thank you very much for the opportunity to present you with my written testimony in support of this legislation.

I recently graduated high school in June 2011 with high honors and without a single “C” on my high school transcript. At the start of my high school career, I began below reading and writing grade level and barely meeting my knowledge in math. However, I started noticing the opportunities provided to me by the public school I attended, which was predominantly Caucasian. I began going to homework tutoring, and getting involved with the school’s jazz band and the school’s theatre department. I was able to make major progress right away.

Soon I was ahead in math, taking Geometry with all the sophomores as a freshman. I then became a homework mentor for the rest of the freshmen. Then, I became qualified to take college level Advanced Placement classes in subjects like English Language & Composition, Biology, and a multidisciplinary course on democracy offered by the local university, all as a junior in high school. Junior year, I also became one of six students statewide to be awarded in the University of Portland’s Festival of Jazz, as the Outstanding Soloist Award (playing the tenor saxophone).

This same year, I also became the president of my high school’s drama department. My senior year, I became a music tutor for the local middle school and played a lead role in the play that was selected as one of the top ten plays in the nation and Canada, and performed it in Nebraska in front thousands of students uniting to celebrate excellence in theatre education for high schools across the globe.

I am an undocumented immigrant. I was accepted to several universities across Oregon and Washington, but right now I am studying in my local community college because it is the only education I can afford. I am asking you to please see the contribution that

1631 NE Broadway, #453 | Portland, OR 97232 | 971-244-4954 (ph) | 503-284-0542 (fax)

[info@momentumalliance.org](mailto:info@momentumalliance.org) | [www.studentallianceproject.org](http://www.studentallianceproject.org)

[oregondreamactivist@gmail.com](mailto:oregondreamactivist@gmail.com) | [www.ordreamactivist.org](http://www.ordreamactivist.org)

undocumented students make in our schools. Many of my fellow peers fall under so much pressure and confusion that they don't even try to explore their potential. Please know that this affects us all as a whole, and having access to in-state tuition will make our dreams of pursuing higher education significantly more tangible.

Thank you very much, and please vote "yes" on tuition equity!

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