

Chair Holvey, members of the committee, my name is Jackson Stalley. I work for Western Oregon University's Hamersly Library as an electronic resource and serial technician. I am also a member of SEIU 503 and I am president of my campus local, WOU 082.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 3116.

Currently, information on Oregon University System contracts is not readily available. In fact, it is quite difficult to gather and, with the exception of capital construction contracts, OUS makes no information available on the Oregon Transparency website.

HB 3116 removes the Oregon University System's exemption from the existing contracting code. Passing HB 3116 will increase transparency and ensure that OUS is held to the high standards applied to other entities spending taxpayer money.

Highlighting this problem, a recent audit by the Secretary of State found that OUS's current financial reporting is not effective for evaluation and cost management. For example, in our own research over the last year, we ran into many challenges even gaining access to how Oregon universities spend public dollars.

It took quite a bit of time and money to get just a partial list of contracts, but here are a few examples of what we found for just fiscal year 2012 :

- Oregon State University spent over \$25 million of taxpayer money contracting out maintenance and IT in 2012 alone.

- Portland State University spent over \$1.5 million of taxpayers' money on miscellaneous personal service contracts. PSU does not provide any additional information as to what "misc personal service contracts" might entail.

In 2009, Oregon passed legislation to increase accountability of how taxpayer money was spent. A key piece of this legislation requires most public employers to complete a feasibility study before contracting out services over \$250,000. If this study shows that it is less expensive using in-house personnel, the work will not be contracted out. **This just makes sense.** What doesn't make sense is to continue to exempt Oregon universities, allowing them to spend millions with no accountability, while our students bear more of the cost of public education than ever before.

Other committees in this building are debating the issue of greater autonomy for Oregon's universities. It is essential we require the highest level of transparency whenever public dollars are being spent. It is even more essential as the legislature considers bills that lessen state oversight over Oregon's universities and how they spend taxpayer dollars. This is especially true in light of the recent audit of OUS's current financial reporting.

At a time when Oregon's students and their families are paying more and accumulating ever increasing debt, we have an obligation to guarantee that they know how their hard earned dollars are being spent. Extending the contracting out provisions of HB 3116 to OUS helps us spend wisely and provides the best oversight of public dollars. Our students and taxpayers deserve no less.

As such, I urge you to support HB 3116.

Chair Holvey, members of the committee, thank you for your time and I am happy to answer any questions.