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[March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015]

To: House Committee on Higher Education, Innovation, and Workforce Development  
From: Ashley T. Jackson  
RE: 2516 – 4

Chair Read, Vice-Chairs) Gallegos & Whisnant, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ashley Jackson and I am a 2<sup>nd</sup> year student at Lane Community College, and I am here with the Oregon Student Association to urge your support HB2516 and the proposed -4 amendments.

This amendment would give the Oregon Open State program the funds to reconstruct one of the biggest problems most students face within their first term, the cost of required classroom materials. Not only is the cost of textbooks a hidden expense when it comes to higher education but students are choosing to opt out of classes because of this cost. This is having an impact on enrollment and outcomes. Opting out of one required class can postpone degree completion by 12 months and sometimes more.

According to the Census Bureau's latest report, since 1978, textbook prices have inflated 812%. Every term, the reality of this barrier to success is made apparent by student's phones getting shut off, students choosing a book over a week of meals, and even choosing a book over paying rent. Lane Community College has one of the highest houseless/homeless student populations in Oregon. This amendment would put expand a program that has already had far reaching impacts on Students. I personally would be able to put my son in after school childcare so I could attend afternoon classes if I didn't have to pay an average of \$300 on textbooks and required classroom materials every term. This is a tradeoff I should never have to consider.

As a student leader, I've been working tenaciously to raise awareness about OERs on my campus because I know that 1 teacher, choosing an OER for their class will mean that approximately 30 students will save between \$200-\$400 dollars each. That's for 1 class. I imagine a world where students don't have to starve for their education. Unfortunately, this can be the reality for not only myself, but my family and other students. Students don't have to make a decision to have a roof over their head or buying the required text. Information and access to knowledge shouldn't be a commodity of the rich but a common public good.

I have worked with students all over Oregon to promote Open Educational Resources because our student government adopted this campaign as the solution to affordability but by implementing OERs on a state level. Please know that by supporting this amendment, you will also be addressing the issues of access, sustainability and quality education.

The next step for OERs to take hold and develop into the viable solution they promise is for professionals and institutions to be funded. The future of students and the fiscal health of our institutions rely on a change and Open Educational Resources have already helped many teachers and students improve the quality of their educational experience.

This is why I support HB 2516, and ask you all in this committee to pass it.



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Please remember my story when voting on this bill. Thank you for letting me speak with you today.

Sincerely,

Ashley Jackson, Lane Community College, [aslccvicepresident@gmail.com](mailto:aslccvicepresident@gmail.com)