

Statement to be read at House Committee On Higher Education, Innovation, and Workforce Development Committee Hearing Wednesday April 1:

Chair Read and Members of the committee,

Thank you for allowing my statement to be read today. Due to school and extracurricular demands, I am unable to be in Salem today, but have asked Jon to read this statement.

First, I would like to thank many of you for taking the time to meet with me this past Tuesday, to talk about the many bills regarding higher education before you this session. I appreciated the time to give you all updates about what has been happening at the UO, and the advice and guidance you all were able to give me.

Today I come before you in support of HB 3237--a great bill that would give appropriate representation to graduate student employees at Universities with governing boards. As the current and only student member on the Board of Trustees at UO, I am very much in favor of increased representation for students, especially graduate students. As it stands today, I as an undergraduate student am the only voice that graduate students have on the Board of Trustees, a body that negotiates with the Graduate Teaching Fellow Federation during their bargaining sessions as well as the group that decides what kind of benefits they get and how high their tuition is.

Graduate student employees are put in a unique situation at every university. They are both the employees and the students of the university and therefore have a completely different perspective than the faculty, classified staff and student members on the Board of Trustees. The fact that students have representation on this board is important, but it simply isn't enough. As an undergraduate student, I can't possibly know what it is like to teach a class full of undergraduates while at the same time taking a full course load, I don't know what it is like to have no representation on the other side of the bargaining table and I don't know what it is like to not have a voice on the governing board of UO.

GTFs at the UO teach 1/3 of all classes. They are an integral part of our University and frankly, the institution would not be able to function without them. Despite this fact, GTFs have no choice but to rally, to lobby and to fight everyday to ensure that the issues that they hold near and dear are taken into account when our board meets.

I do my best to represent GTFs, I truly do. But I know that saying that I perfectly represent GTFs accurately is about as accurate as saying that someone who has lived in Portland their entire life could adequately and accurately represent all of Eastern Oregon.

Again, I thank you so much for allowing this bill to be heard today. As someone who sits on the Board, and sees the innerworkings of how the Board operates, I am thankful for the opportunity to speak out in favor of this bill. I hope that you Chair Read and the other

representatives of this committee will take it upon yourselves to move this bill through a work session with haste and vigor. This is fantastic bill is necessary for the many students at UO who currently are voiceless. Thank you for your time.