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April 6, 2015

To: Ways and Means Joint Subcommittee on Education  
From: Candalynn Johnson  
RE: Funding for Community Colleges

Good Morning Co-Chair's Komp and Monroe and members of the committee.  
Thank you for hearing my testimony.

My name is Candalynn Johnson from Sweet Home Oregon. I am a first generation college student at Linn-Benton Community College and I am here to talk to you about community college funding.

I live in a family of six where both of my parents are going back to college with me and my sister hopefully joining us later this year. My parents decided to go back to school because they found it necessary in order to improve our family's future with my sister being mentally disabled. In order to feed my family and pay the rent I've had to stay home with all of us taking out the maximum amount of loans possible, along with me working two part time jobs and applying for scholarships. My family barely scrapes by as is and even though I want to move out and start my own life, I feel the pressure of staying behind in order to help my family with living expenses.

My story however is not unique. Students and our families are going to desperate measures to stay afloat and in school in hopes that college will get us out of financial insecurity. Oregonians shouldn't be forced into loans in order to live let alone received college education. I am asking this committee to seriously consider measures necessary to take in order to increase budgets for our community colleges.

Sincerely,

Candalynn Johnson  
Linn Benton Community College