

April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2015

To: Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Subcommittee on Education

From: Skye Troy

RE: Community College Budget

Co-Chairs Monroe and Komp, and members of the committee:

Good morning, my name is Skye Troy and I'm a student at Mt. Hood Community College. I'm here with the Oregon Community College Student Association to urge you to fund community college at \$560 million in the coming biennium. My experience is one among many of the students around the state who can identify with the financial burdens of college. I was raised by a single mother who worked 2-3 jobs at a time, 7 days a week, and could still barely manage to keep food on the table. This is why I am a first generation college student, and am here to share my experience today.

By the age of 16 I was employed part-time, and then journeyed to Oregon to pursue my degrees of higher education. During the second year of college I saw my financial aid money cut directly in half. , Since then I got a job on campus with the student government to help with some these costs while also working 20-30 hours a week at Red Lobster in order to finance my education and living expenses. As an individual I've struggled to balance my work and education while keeping my head above water and not drowning in education related debt—but I know that my story is not unique. My classmates and friends around the state face similar struggles..

Yet, I know I'm concerned that if we see another round of tuition increases if we face another tuition spike, it'll price me out of my education and I don't have the capacity to work more hours to pay for community college which should be affordable for everyone. While my

dedication is to obtaining my degree, most of my time is demanded for working in order to survive and succeed. This is why I'm urging you all to prioritize funding for community colleges, which is vital to the success of over 300,000 Oregon community college students like myself in Oregon. Thank you for letting me speak to you today.