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To: House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development

From: Candalynn Johnson

RE: HB 2666

Hello Chair Reardon, Vice-Chairs Alonso-Leon and Whisnant, Members of the Committee,

My name is Candalynn Johnson and I am a 4th year senior at Oregon State University, as well as a member of Associated Students of Oregon State as the Executive Director of Government Relations, and I serve as Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors for the Oregon Student's Association. I have been involved in student government both at Linn-Benton Community College and Oregon State where both organizations were given the responsibility and autonomy to control their own student fees in order to give much needed services to students. Students trust that these elected and appointed leaders will make decisions that reflect the needs of the student body and if they do not agree with that decision then they can hold them accountable. It is entirely necessary for student governments to have control over their own fees for a few key reasons:

1. Students Governments in essence were formed on many campuses like Oregon State due to the need for an avenue for students to voice where their money should and should not be spent.
2. Giving autonomy to students helps develop leaders who understand accountability to an organization or large body of people, how to budget large amounts of money, how to communicate to students about a budget process, how to allocate funds and implement changes in our institutions to reflect the needs of those that they are there to serve.
3. Without autonomy, students have little to no say on how, or what their money is being spent on and Administration, specifically at Community Colleges are willing to just wait students out because they will only be there for a year. This is particularly problematic because without this autonomy student voices can be silenced because of high turn over.
4. Student Fees fund services and programs that exist on our campuses that we are willing to target modest resources towards. These programs and services expand our educational opportunities, keep us safe, and strengthen student groups and clubs, which is where students often find community and support. The services and programs also increase retention and graduation rates, while also enhancing the campus and community atmosphere.

The ability to set and allocate the student fee would open doors to an education experience that students at public universities already have and community college student leaders deserve. Students learn how to adequately serve by having control and accountability in the process, to raise additional resources for educational experiences outside of the classroom, and to support critical services on campuses. At our core, this is the most important process that



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we do as an organization and we wouldn't be fully representing students, if we didn't take ownership of this process.

That is why I urge this committee to support HB 2666 and give community college students the same leadership opportunities and voice as the rest of us.