

April 7, 2017

To: Oregon Legislature
From: Beth S. Landy, Faculty/Career Counselor, Lane Community College
Re: Testimony for SB 5524

As part of Lane Community College's "Leadership Team" for our Oregon Promise First-Year Experience Program, I've seen first-hand the positive impact that Oregon Promise funding has had for community college students. To date, 300 of our 500+ Oregon Promise students have responded to my "Career Questionnaire" and the first question I asked them was "What was your motivation to attend college and why did you choose Lane?" Many students replied that they would NOT be in college this year if they did not have Oregon Promise funding. Lane Oregon Promise students achieved almost a 92% persistence rate from Fall term to Winter term, which is astounding from a retention perspective. Research shows that "financial concerns" are a primary reason that students "drop out" or "stop out;" thus, I must draw the conclusion that Oregon Promise funding was a major contributor to these students' ability to stay in school. Increasing degree completion and decreasing student loan debt are national and local priorities, and access to higher education is critical for economic mobility and increased employment opportunities; Oregon Promise funding must continue for our state to achieve these goals. Thank you.