



THE OREGON STUDENT ASSOCIATION

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TO: House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee
FROM: Cynthia Aguilar-Arizmendi
SUBJECT: SB 1563 – Tuition Equity
DATE: February 22nd, 2018

Chair Reardon and Members of the Committee:

My name is Cynthia Aguilar-Arizmendi and I attend the University of Oregon.

I decided to attend the University of Oregon because it seemed to be the best option, at the time, in terms of money. I am a second-year student studying Public Relations and I am from Portland, Oregon but I am originally from Guerrero, Mexico. Currently I am benefitting from Tuition Equity. I am fortunate enough that despite being born in another country I was granted tuition equity by the state. Although I chose the UO due to what seemed more doable in terms of money, I still had to go thousands of dollars into debt to cover my first two years of college. Despite my mom's low-income I do not qualify for federal aid, due to my status. This also means I do not qualify for Pathway Oregon, a program that many of my friends are fortunate enough to have. I come from a single-parent household and my mother cannot provide any financial support whatsoever. Not only do I have to worry about how I am going to pay for school but I have to worry about how I will pay for my rent. If I had had the opportunity to qualify for programs such as Pathway my money could go towards paying my cost of living and to have some food. Because of my status, there were many scholarships that I did not qualify for coming into college. Since then, there have been many that have opened up, however, many of those are still only available to those who are coming into college as first-year students. Tuition increases put a burden on me because it seems that no matter how hard I try, what I do to show that I am an outstanding citizen of this community and how I perform academically, there seems to be little to no scholarships for which I qualify or tuition increases become hard to match.

I urge you to pass SB 1563 in order to allow our undocumented Oregonians the opportunity to fulfill their academic dreams.