



Oregon Student Association

Dear Cochairs Roblan and Smith Warner and members of the committee,

My name is Dustin Williams and I am student at Central Oregon Community College. I am writing to you all to testify thanking you all for your game-changing investments in k-12 funding. I also want to urge you to support education cradle to career in Oregon and we can do that by including an expansion of the Oregon Opportunity Grant to all Pell-eligible students in this package.

Currently, I am in my third year at COCC. I have been fortunate enough to receive both the Oregon Opportunity Grant and the Pell Grant. Without both of these grants, pursuing higher education would have not been a possibility for me. Throughout my time at COCC, I have been able to avoid accumulating student debt, but this has not been easy. I chose to attend COCC because it allowed me to live with my parents to cut down on costs. My parents have struggled with their finances most of their lives, so I was often nervous about pursuing higher education because it meant that I would end up in debt like them. However, when I learned that I was eligible to receive the Oregon Opportunity Grant, I could feel doors within higher education opening for me.

Even though I have been fortunate to receive the OOG, paying for school has still been a challenge. I currently work part time at my parents coffee shop all weekend, so I often only have the capacity to focus on school during the week. Additionally, I struggle to pay for other expenses in life due to the high cost of higher education. I want to be able to move out of my parents house and eventually pursue a degree at Western Oregon University, but I am not sure if this a possibility for me, even with support from the OOG. While I still struggle to pay for

OREGON STUDENT ASSOCIATION

The Oregon Student Association (OSA) is a statewide, student-led advocacy and organizing non-profit established in 1975 to represent, serve, and protect the collective interests of students in postsecondary education in Oregon

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school, I can't imagine how hard it would be to stay enrolled with my financial situation of I did not receive the OOG.

Including an expansion of the Oregon Opportunity Grant in the revenue package could add all pell eligible recipients to the grant, which are students who are most in need of greater financial support. This could mean 16,000 students in Oregon knowing they have the opportunity to stay in school, and continue to pursue their goals of completing higher education. Thanks again for your wonderful investments in k-12, which I value and fully support. Please show your support for Oregon students by including an expansion of the Oregon Opportunity Grant. Thank you for your time.

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