



Portland Community College
12000 SW 49th Ave
Portland, OR 97219

April 10, 2019

Co-Chair Roblan, Co-Chair Smith Warner, Co-Vice Chair Knopp, Co-Vice Chair Smith and
Members of the Joint Committee on Student Success

Subject: Don't Leave College Students Behind in New Education Funding

Legislators have a once-in-decade opportunity to invest in Oregon students and reform Oregon's tax system, but the current plan laid out in House Bill 2019 leaves college students behind.

By 2020, 65 percent of new jobs are expected to require education and training beyond high school. To provide Oregonians the opportunity they need to thrive and for businesses to help grow the economy, we need to support students from cradle to career. Since Measure 5, Oregon students have seen tuition increases vastly outpace inflation while programs and services have been cut because state investment fell further behind. Student debt is higher than it's ever been.

I have been a medical assistant for ten years. I always intended on advancing my career goals, but after I had a family, I had to put my goals to the side to take care of my children. Now they are older, and I am working towards becoming a registered nurse with my bachelors in nursing.

The most significant change that I have experienced was moving from Fiji to the United States. When I came to the United States there were many barriers, but language was the hardest. Learning a new language and trying to study was a monumental task, but I learned that I am far stronger than I thought.

I chose this field of work because I am passionate about helping people in need. This line of work is very rewarding and fulfilling. I couldn't advance without Portland Community College, and getting started on my Nursing degree is one of the best things I have done for my family as well as for the community.

I urge you to support Governor Kate Brown's call for including post-secondary education in the spending proposal before this committee.

Shaleey Sharma