

To: Joint Committee on Student Success
From: Priscila Molinar
Date: April 11, 2019

Co-Chairs Smith Warner, Roblan and members of the committee,

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak to you today in support of the Student Success Act. My name is Priscila Molinar, and I am a sophomore at Woodburn High School. I am also a member of the Planned Parenthood Woodburn Teen Council, where I serve as a peer educator for sex ed. Through Teen Council, I learned about medically-accurate and inclusive sexual health information and now lead classroom presentations for my peers on topics such as birth control, abstinence, STIs, and healthy relationships.

Last year when I was in my first relationship, I felt like I didn't have anyone to talk to about it. I had questions about relationships, health, and how to keep myself safe, but didn't feel like I could go anywhere with my concerns, and I wasn't getting the sex education and information about resources from my school. I had a friend who was on the Teen Council, and she helped me by connecting me with resources and information. I felt so supported and empowered that I wanted to be able to do the same thing for other students, so I joined this year.

During my time on Teen Council, I was surprised by how many seniors I spoke to who didn't know about different forms of birth control or how to correctly use contraception, like condoms. I think this lack of understanding is due to a lack of education. A recent study by the Oregon Health Authority found that only 35 out of 197 school districts have a plan to teach sex ed. The reason schools gave for not being able to provide sex education to their students was a lack of funding and not having the right training and curriculum. We need resources. Knowing about your body, relationships, and health care resources helps you make healthier choices, keep yourself safe, get access to health care, and plan for your future. Getting that important education and health care shouldn't depend on what school you go to.

I am so excited about Teen Council because it has made me more aware and I like being a resource and support for both parents and students. My goal is to someday become an anesthesiologist. Coming from a low-income school in a town that struggles with money, I wish I had access to more classes and opportunities that would help me on the path to becoming a doctor. I would like the \$2 billion raised by the Student Success Act to go towards expanding classes and extracurricular activities; taking mental health more seriously by having more dedicated mental health counselors for schools; and by providing sex ed that goes beyond the bare basics of health class and includes all the information young people need to know to have healthy and successful lives and relationships.

The committee has a great opportunity to invest in students like me by making sure schools get the funds they need. Please vote yes on the Student Success Act.

