

Oregon Student Association



April 24, 2019

To: Senate Committee on Education

From: Odalis Aguilar

RE: Testimony in support of HB 3280

Good afternoon Chair Wagner and members of education committee,

My name is Odalis Aguilar Aguilar and I am a first year student at the University of Oregon studying Ethnic Studies and Spanish, and I am also State Affairs Commissioner for the Associated Students of the University of Oregon. In addition to that I am also an ASUO representative on the Tuition and Fee Advisory Board and a part time Policy Associate for the Oregon Student Association. Thank you for allowing me the time to speak in support of HB 3280. The Oregon Student Association has identified this bill as one of our priorities this session. Every two years OSA conducts a survey campaign across the state as part of our organizational issue choosing process. We engage thousands of students. In 2017 we collected 17,000 surveys from our member campuses around the state. Students ranked issues in higher education they cared about the most. "Student Control Over Tuition Setting & College Governance" was the top 4th issue students cared about the most in our results.

I am here as an example of how valuable a student voice is. During my time at the U of O, I have taken the initiative to become more involved within my student government as well as around campus so I understand the perspectives of students, faculty and staff and I can tell you that my peers and I are capable of making decisions that are good for the institution and our futures. I have also witnessed how although without the students the University has, we are put at the foot of the priorities for our institutions.

Affordability encompasses many aspects that administrators in positions will not understand because they are not students attending this institution right now. Many speak about their experience and when they graduated college, "they were able to get by if they worked during the summers and maybe had a job during the school year." These are people who attended college over ten to twenty years ago. The reality of students is that many are priced out after their first year especially those who are not pell eligible due a few thousand dollars their parents made that put them over the income bracket. Students are living in cars, not eating so that they can afford textbooks or pay off their tuition and putting themselves through unnecessary stress because of how expensive tuition is. These are real students. The non-voting faculty, staff and students bring valuable perspective in the tuition setting process especially on the HECC and they are also able to make these decisions because they care about the present and the future. This is why as the Oregon Student Association, we are advocating for HB 3280. We believe that it is time to give all stakeholders an equal voice and representation.

OREGON STUDENT ASSOCIATION

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I hope that you take this testimony into consideration and urge you to support HB 3280.

Respectfully,
Odalis Aguilar Aguilar
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