

Chair Representative Margaret Doherty and members of the House Committee on Education:

I am writing this testimony, humbly asking support for HB 4099 COFA Tuition bill. My name is Liana Jorbwoj an international student transferring from Marshall Island. I chose Eastern Oregon University over multiple academic institutions near my home because I knew Oregon State has supported my colleagues attending EOU through numerous diplomatic affiliations -we applaud your service. Despite all the academic challenges in pursuing education, financial stability is an extremely challenging issue faced living in the United States.

I can assure financial matters are found with us COFA students -the issue prohibits stable enrollment due to unaffordability. We are paying triple the price from last year with the institution currently raised the tuition rates. As non-residents, we pay over 30k compared to residents. Without a doubt, we will exhaust our scholarships, grants, and paying back the school will take years.

State of Oregon's support under the best interest and supportive role of the COFA Alliance Nationals Network has been assisting all of us in pursuing our academic ambitions. I know that, with this HB 4099 Tuition Bill being passed, education will enable us to accomplish our aspirations, and will imprint a positive influence on our little sisters and brothers back home. With all due respect, I kindly ask for your support, along with my COFA colleagues, to support our educational goals, for us to return and reciprocate the same support to our communities.

Best Regards, Liana.

Chair Representative Margaret Doherty and members of the House Committee on Education:

My name is Maria Leviticus and I am one out of forty-three Marshallese students attending Eastern Oregon University. I am writing this testimony in support of the HB 4099 COFA Tuition Bill. I support this bill because as a noncitizen, it is hard for me to pay for living. I have been residing in the United States for eight years, but I was declined to pay in-state tuition just because I attended high school in Arizona.

I intend to engage in my degree in the medical field as a Doctor. I want to return home and replace my father's position as a Doctor. I am currently a Sophomore at EOU, however, the rise of tuition fees for Eastern Oregon University for the past couple of years prohibits me to support my older sister's family and myself. My sister and I both work at a fast-food restaurant and to meet my financial obligation -I have no choice.

Right now, I am currently working while being a full-time student, and it is a struggle to juggle between work and school. I know passing this bill, not only it will help me, but also my fellow students who came from the islands to achieve their academic ambitions. We are all in need of your help to make it better for us to achieve those dreams. Thank you and may God bless you and your family.

Best Regard, Maria.