

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is **Adrianna Santiago** and I am a nursing student at Lane Community College. My educational goal is to improve myself and the standard living of my future family. My educational goal as well is to become the first female to graduate from a college/ university and show other first-generation students that with dedication we can accomplish everything. I am very passionate about making a difference in people's lives. Becoming a nurse will allow me to make short term or long term relationships, helping people one on one, learning new things and provide the best care a nurse can give.

During the pandemic, we are currently going through I have lost my job. Since I am a **DACA recipient**, I do not receive financial help to help me pay my education, so I have to work a job and at times a full-time job and part-time to be able to pay my education. It has been difficult trying to figure out how I will get the money for these expenses as well as any medical expenses in case any family member or myself gets sick.

Luckily I received some help from Emergency Funds that helped me out with my tuition. There should be more resources for DACA and Undocumented students. Our community has been one of the most affected by this pandemic. Doing online classes this term was definitely hard for myself and my peers. Due to school closures, we couldn't do any labs our professor had for us. I tend to soak in knowledge better when I am physically in class.

Again, because of the economic downturn I lost my job and currently living with a lot of anxiety of trying to figure out if I will be able to get enough money to continue my career goal. If the Supreme Court decides to remove DACA it will only make it one hundred times harder for me to get a job and still continue my education and career goals.

I need all the support from elected leaders. Help all communities and mainly the undocumented students and other marginalized folx who are taking a harder hit due to this pandemic. Protect the PUSF, CCSF, and other vital funding and supports for students. **Hear us out, listen to us, and support us.** Help our voices be heard to those above everyone else. Find more resources for our community. Thank you for your time.

Hi,

My name is Balkhiis Noor. I am a proud child of Somali immigrant parents. I am a first generation college student, majoring in Psychology. I aspire to one day return to the motherland and help my people with mental illness.

Growing up in Portland, I've experienced a lot of racism, inequity, prejudices and so much more. As a young Somali American I didn't know what I was encountering when my non-muslim peers would ridicule my hijab with jokes about being bald, or having lice. Or being in public seeing the frustration in people's eyes with my mom, as she tried to communicate with them. I felt the aversion they had with her "broken English", however they did not understand the weight of our native tongue, as this was the language spoken by warriors in Somalia

Deciding to attend Portland State filled me with enthusiasm, as it advertised it's divestment and equality. I later came to find out it was all a facade and ended up being disappointed. Freshman year I experienced lack of diversity with faculties as well as colleagues. The only moments I felt diversity was when I was in the Pan-African Commons (PAC) or any other spaces designated for POC. In the middle of my Sophomore year I witnessed my friend get fired from her job as well as her co-workers based on racial biases. As an upcoming Junior who knows what I'll face this time.

Now we are in the mist of Corona which impacted all of us economically, mentally, socially, and so much more. The Cares Act was very helpful, however I was financially dependent once again the following month. Learning remotely also wasn't helpful. I learned little to nothing. Considering having "free time" I had none, as I was still helping my family out, and being overwhelmed with the school load.

As we turn the leaf for the future, I ask for a few things. As leaders, consider realizing your privilege. Understand that others are going through things that you may never experience. Empathize with minorities. Be financially considerate. Consider mainly college students who are having difficult times trying to get an education while working to make ends meet. Many post college students understand the struggle, yet allow the cycle of burden to continue, let's end that. Before radicalizing any decision regarding to law or regulations, let's see how it'll affect everyone. And lastly, have trainings that prevent having implicit biases and racial discrimination.

Thank you for your time and efforts on taking the role of serving us all.

Warm regards

Balkhiis

Equal Rights Advocacy Director

Portland State Undergraduate Student

To Whom It May Concern:

At the beginning of the quarantine in March, I was kicked out of my place of living, and later needed to fully vacate, my living situation. I do fall into the at risk group for COVID and caused a lot of concern. Fortunately, as a result of the quarantine, I've been securely housed and am only now in need of moving to another location. There have been difficulties with getting finances arranged to get into a living situation, in part due to challenges around receiving finances from school as a result of my current living insecurity. Ideally, by July, I'll be able to get any assistance needed to get a living situation arranged. **I urge lawmakers to please protect vital services for students.**

Sincerely,

Dela Patterson

To whom it may concern,

I attend Lane Community College. I am studying business. My goal is to transfer to UO and obtain a Bachelor's degree in accounting.

Covid-19 has negatively impacted me in many ways. I lost my work-study job and am not eligible for unemployment. I am also not eligible to receive stimulus funds. I was only able to take one class, so I am not eligible to receive the loans that I would have gotten if not for quarantine. I don't qualify for enough food stamps to cover my food needs.

I have received a total \$380 in additional funding from Lane. I am forced to put off needed medical and dental procedures, as well as needed vehicle maintenance, due to the financial impact of covid-19. Distance learning has been a nightmare. What used to take an hour, now takes 3 days. My success at school relies heavily on the educational environment, study groups, in-person tutoring, and instructor office hours. Without these resources, I have discovered that I cannot succeed. I can not continue to attend school while remote learning is a requirement.

I have found it extremely difficult to prioritize school with all the chaos happening in our country. I have discovered that human connection, my relationship with God and the Church, and serving my community are the key components in surviving this very difficult and challenging time.

I need school to be open. I need access to the resources that will help me be successful. I need my school's library. I need financial support. I need human connection, face-to-face interactions. I have changed and I am sure my future as a student has changed too. When campus resumes in person classes I will be a more active and vocal student and I will be more involved in advocating for the implementation of student support systems, like adequate housing and programs to increase food security.

Thank you for your time,

Jennifer Cuthers

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(541) 658-9282

To whom it may concern,

My name is **Imani Dorsey** and I am a University of Oregon alum. I graduated in 2019 with a degree in Ethnic Studies and a Legal Studies Minor. During my time at the University of Oregon I served as the 2018-19 Internal Vice President for the Associated Students of the University of Oregon (ASUO), was a student board member for the Oregon Student Association, served on the Tuition and Fee Advisory Board for a few years, and was employed by the university working student jobs throughout my time on campus.

I was heavily engaged in the campus community, as a student, worker, and advocate. Although, I want to make the distinction that I wasn't this engaged because I had a general desire to be, but rather I felt my survival necessitated it. Throughout my time as a student, I spent countless hours advocating for the financial accessibility of higher education. I am writing this testimony as someone who has been empowered by higher education in Oregon and is continuing my education to the graduate-level. I am also writing this testimony as someone who has been oppressed by higher education and knows all too well the struggles students face on a day-to-day basis. These struggles have not subsided during the pandemic, rather the pandemic has magnified the inequitable and unjust barriers and obstacles BIPOC folx live with on a daily basis.

In anticipation of the second special session of 2020, **I urge the Oregon State Legislature to protect the right to education and to uplift marginalized students by fully funding higher education and ensuring no cuts are made to the PUSF, CCSF, SNAP, Unemployment Insurance, and any other services that support students at this time.**

When I was in my undergraduate at the UO, my ability to attend was extremely sensitive to tuition increases and services available on campus. My parents had to take out huge loans to afford my education, but they reassured me frequently that I deserve to be attending a university and they are more than willing to sacrifice their financial security and future to invest in my own and create a life they never had. I am a first-generation student and Oregon resident. **I am a queer Black woman and working-class student.**

Tuition increases were sending the message to me and my family that students like me did not belong at the UO. It felt like I was being punished for needing higher education. After my freshman year when the BOT and the HECC approved a 10% tuition increase in 2017, I could not stand by idly and just let this happen — in order to protect my right to an education and my family, I had to intervene and get involved in the tuition setting process. While I am outlining pre-COVID experiences, I feel this context will provide lawmakers with a clear snapshot of higher education in Oregon TODAY and how these gaps in support increase tenfold due to the pandemic.

In our tuition and fee advisory board meetings, we talked a lot about the state and how your funding will factor into recommendations for the level of tuition. While I do believe the institutionalization of student voices in the process improved things with Tuition Transparency Act (HB 4141), the problem was not the tuition advisory boards, it was the disinvestment from the state and the reliance on students to fix the budgetary problems we weren't even responsible for. My role on this board was to resist tuition increases, but the responses students received made it seem like our asks were not realistic. Why is wanting an affordable education unrealistic? Seeing the lack of change or improvement from my freshman year to now is unbelievably disheartening — why are we still having the same conversation?

It appears that the legislature and universities are comfortable with the status quo while the most marginalized students starve and overextend themselves just so they can get the education they have a right to. Students are pitted against faculty, staff, and graduate students for resources in this state of scarcity you all have helped create. *Does this sound fair to you?* Tuition hikes and cuts to our valued faculty and on-campus services are a harsh reminder that higher education institutions are inaccessible and exclusionary, especially to those who see and need higher education to be their ticket. By committing to and prioritizing students in Oregon's higher education system through protecting vital funding and services, lawmakers can act on values they have vocally supported and live up to their promises of equity, compassion and fairness.

Please remember my testimony. Thank you for your time.

My name is **Karthik Vijay** and I attend Central Oregon Community College. I am currently a business major and have career goals of starting my own business one day.

As for how Covid-19 has impacted me I've had to leave a couple of jobs I had at the school since my safest option was to move back home. Not only that but the college transportation closed due to COVID-19 and that would have made it really hard for me to be self-sufficient as a college student that is heavily dependent on public transportation, not only that but in terms of food access I would have been in a tight situation because of limited work and I am lucky enough not to have gone through that but I have known people who were in similar situations and didn't have any financial assistance which must have been really challenging for them. The resources I have gotten was that the school offered online tutoring but felt like that could have expanded more since it was in high demand, I also got some resources for online employment along with CARES act funding through the school for the spring term so that way I had some financial assistance as a student.

Distance learning has impacted the way I receive help in regards to my academics because I'm the type of student that likes face-to-face interaction and get help from teachers and tutors in a physical setting, so switching to distance learning affected my mental health because I couldn't receive that face-to-face interaction that provided me with the confidence to ask for help. The school did offer virtual office hours, but it just wasn't the same for me. And therefore, it would have been nice if the school provided some form of student online space where we could share our struggles and support each other to help cope with the poor mental health of lack of face-to-face interactions.

The economic downturn impacted my education because most of the resources that were available in person were not fully available online, I do understand that it must have been just as hard for the staff because there was limited time to create a fully online school system and therefore the quick transition had teachers and students alike learn to adjust. However, now that many schools have adopted the remote learning system my hope is that there can be more personalized methods of providing high-quality online education in the future.

The support I need from elected leaders in Salem is to help work together to create legislation that promotes student success online. What I mean by this is working with the schools to provide financial assistance programs that reflect the student population with bilingual assistance and making sure that students from all backgrounds get the help they need. As a student that comes from an immigrant family, I have to learn ways to find the resources my school offers because not all resources are discussed to students and that needs to change because students are working hard to make sure their needs are met. I would also hope that elected leaders can create programs that help close gaps for students, these needs range from diversity/representation needs to academic and community needs.

Thank you for your time and I urge lawmakers to continue to prioritize students at this time by protecting the Public University Support Fund, Community College Support Fund, the Oregon Opportunity Grant, SNAP benefits, Unemployment Insurance and other vital resources to ensure the stability of public higher education in Oregon.

Hello, my name is **Lauren Kennedy**. Up until recently I could call myself a student at the University of Oregon, an Oregon Duck, but due to the current state of the world and how it has affected my family and self financially I have had to make a few changes. Out of the five daughters in my family I am one of three that is attending college, and am the only one out of those three that chose a school out of state. Prior to the virus, attending UO wasn't the most financially stable choice. I dual enrolled between Lane Community College and the University to lessen the cost and even thought of becoming an Oregon resident. All these plans though took a major hit when covid-19 began to spread in the U.S.

Before covid-19 became a reality I had a full-time job at a restaurant I loved, finally decided which major I wanted to declare, and honestly felt ready for the future. Everything actually became brighter. **Unfortunately** that light blew out before it was able to become a flame. As of right now I am enrolled at the local community college back at home and no longer have the status of being an Oregon Duck. Money is even tighter in my life. I was laid off from my job and have yet to receive unemployment. With the interest in my loans starting to rise as well I am trying to do my best. I know I have it much better than many, but covid has still not been too kind.

I am not an Oregon resident and understand I have cut my ties from the beautiful state, but that doesn't mean I want to see other students faced with the same choice I had to make. A choice that although right, was one of the **most painful decisions** I have come to make. The one thing that has truly made me feel the most alone is the fact it seems as if my opinions on this matter mean less than nothing. The bulk of lawmakers and committee members have come to view my generation as dramatic, spoiled, entitled or all of the above. What we ask for is either seen as too much, or we are told life isn't meant to be fair and we should just suck it up. What is going on is undoubtedly unfair, and maybe what we are asking for is too much; but that is because we are a generation that cares.

What I want, and know many others do as well, is for those in a position of power and influence to care enough to listen and realize we want what's best for the majority too. **We are your future and we ask you to step up with us**. We ask you to look in a different direction and to *expand your perspective*. We ask you to actually listen and instead of hear, and come to recognize that it's better to protect the people instead of the power. I hope you do lend an ear to each one of us, because every circumstance is different; and I hope with that you understand that not everyone has the ability or resources to walk the same path as others.

OSA COVID-19 TESTIMONY

- What is your campus, major, and educational/career goals?

My name is Marichelle Gurski. I am a dual-enrolled student at Central Oregon Community College and OSU-Cascades. I am currently a candidate for the Liberal Studies program at OSU Cascades in my senior year. I will graduate in May of 2021. My career goals are to earn my BA in Liberal Studies and then pursue grad school to earn my MA in Expressive Arts Therapy and Family Counseling.

- How has COVID-19 impacted you economically with regards to employment, food, and housing access, childcare and transportation access, etc.?

COVID-19 has impacted my family and me in dramatic ways. COVID-19 has caused me to have my hours cut at my current job working at the community college. I have had to work from home to protect myself and my family from exposure. But for my mother, it's been a more alarming experience.

Before COVID-19, my mother breast cancer had metastasized, and as a result, was diagnosed with stage 4 brain cancer in January 2020. Since diagnosis, she has had to stop working and is now being supported by disability insurance. This income is only 60% of what she was making before leaving work. For the past several months, she has been undergoing harsh treatment-and, coupled with her cancer-has, put her at very high risk for exposure. Since this began, I have become her primary caretaker while living in the same house, so I have to take extra precautions to keep her safe. My mother has been in and out of the hospital over the last two months due to her deteriorating health condition. The added stress of protecting my mother from COVID-19 has caused severe consequences to her mental health and treatment plan. We had an unexpected consequence and a scare when her oral chemo medication was interrupted because of the mass scale disruption of the Healthcare System. These problematic circumstances with my mother, working from home, and having to take classes online, have put a lot of stress on me physically, mentally, and emotionally.

I've had to make some tough decisions about my plans for the summer. My current position working at the school will not be offered through the summer. So my options for working are limited. Due to COVID-19, I have decided not to work this summer and take courses online and use my savings and CARES Act money to keep me afloat financially. My mother's condition puts me in a circumstance where I cannot work in any instance that would give me high exposure. This potential source of income that I usually use to help me pay for tuition and additional cost related to being a student is not available to me at the moment. This hard fact has caused many stressful nights without sleep and thinking about how I'll be able to care for my mother and keep myself financially well.

I would not know what I would do without the stimulus check and the CARES Act. Without aid, I would be in a terrifying place financially, leading to not being able to pay all of our bills, losing the house, and forcing us to make more sacrifices due to financial hardship. This only makes me think of people who are not being given these same resources what are they doing right now to keep them and their families safe.

- What resources have you gotten and what resources do you need?

The resources that I have received have been from the stimulus check, and college financial aid I was given from The CARES Act. I was given \$2,700 in total from both sources-\$1,200 from the stimulus check and \$1500 from the college financial aid. I originally requested more, but I only received 50% of the funds I asked for from the financial aid because the funds had run out. The financial resources I have been able to access have been an enormous help in making it so I can stay enrolled in college this summer and take courses. I also have received Food Stamps, which help me pay for a portion of my groceries; I think I spend around \$500 to \$600 on groceries each month, and the \$200 I receive in food stamps is simply not enough to help me cover it all. Right now, I need additional financial resources to keep me in school and help pay the bills. In the future, I will need more assistance still due to not being able to work over the summer because of my mother's condition. Hopefully, my family will be alright.

- How has distance learning impacted your education? How has the economic downturn impacted your education?

Remote learning has impacted my ability to access the classroom at the beginning of the term. It was challenging to access course materials because of my learning disability having dyslexia and not having a course that offered visual and audio modalities to learn the course material. I had to advocate for my learning style and go back and forth through email with my instructor until we came to some sort of agreement. Right now, I'm being offered PowerPoints with Visual and audio components. But overall, I still feel like I'm a guinea pig in an experiment with remote education. The quality Of Education I am receiving does not match the amount I'm paying tuition wise. I've had multiple times when I have looked up articles or videos from other sources online to understand the course material that my teacher should teach to me, which has been very frustrating. I had to drop a course because I could not handle the fatigue of being on Zoom all day full time for four sessions, two of which are advanced courses that are writing-intensive and demanding mentally. COVID 19 has put me back in fulfilling the requirements for my AAOT degree plan. This could potentially set me back in my expected graduation date for my BA.

- What support do you need from elected leaders in Salem right now?

I need elected leaders to show that they care about the people over special interest groups. I need to see the health and safety of everyone within Oregon-including minorities-are their number one priority. I need all leaders to show up to their job and do the work that needs to be done. No more special groups or corporations lobbying for influence or paid walkouts for days when laws and bills need to be passed, let alone move through the pipeline. The bottom line is that we need people that will show up and do their job regardless of their party's agendas and affiliations while ensuring the safety and health for everyone within Oregon's borders.

As a nation, we need to adopt the moves that other countries have made during this pandemic. A mass majority of other countries' governments are taking care of their citizens in most to all aspects of their lives, while ours is still stumbling to even get us our basic needs met. It is heartbreaking to see local businesses that have been around since I was a child go under and have to close their doors forever. I hear countless stories of people unable to access unemployment calling 700-1000 times a day to be put on hold and ultimately disconnected. Meanwhile, our President is spending taxpayer money to send out vanity letters bailing out corporations that do not consider the health of their employees pushing for capitalist ventures. I need Oregon to be better to show as a state we care about our citizens. The support I feel Oregon needs is solidarity and keeping our vulnerable populations safe. If that means that we have to

have a slow reopening or go through extra hoops to keep others safe, I think that is the smart thing to do. I want legislators to be aware of the risk they put people's lives at when they move too fast and do not consider all options.

I want to see support for students and for people that are working to make Oregon's economy better. I want to see direct support for minority groups like Latinx or African-American communities-people DACA and international students who are being critically affected by this pandemic at alarming rates. I want to see all communities be able to access resources that they need, like food stamps, housing aid, Medical care testing, and The CARES Act. I would like to see an increase in social welfare programs and policies that show forgiveness for rent and mortgage payments. Also, I would like to see Oregon as a state prioritize the education of its students and not let COVID-19 make higher education even more inaccessible to first-generation low-income students.

Melinie Shatto
Co-Op Ed:Political Science
OSA Organizer: Jerrel Brown
Student Testimony

“My COVID-19 Experience”

My name is **Melinie Shatto** and I am a second year student at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. I am currently and have been an intern with the Oregon Student Association for the last two terms. My main focus is pre-law and psychology with the intent of becoming more involved with Civil Rights and helping those that can not speak for themselves. I am a survivor of domestic abuse and continue to better myself through therapy, education and participating in community efforts.

During this time of the pandemic, I have found great support within my college community. It has been a very difficult time to see all those around me suffer the consequences of a system not quite equipped to deal with the magnitude of the pandemic. The stimulus check helped greatly to help pay my rent and utilities *but only for a very limited time.* The Cares Act provided some support in regards to my basic needs, but again for a *very limited amount of time.* We have been shut down for more than a few months now and I feel it would be in the best interest of the many students struggling to get a second round of support to get us through this time of need.

On top of basic finances, we have to face the realization that the stress of those losing their jobs and in turn losing their places to live leads to suicides and mass hysteria. We must consider what will happen if we don't get the support we need. **I am truly grateful for all the support during this time,** however we need even more. It is hard enough under ordinary circumstances to make it as a student. The high costs of tuition is outrageous and the debt incurred is debilitating. We must support our students during this time so that when the virus is completely contained we won't be in utter shambles. **Please protect the PUSF, CCSF, SNAP, UI, and other vital services that support the success of students.**

Thank you for your time.

Hello,

My name is **Neha Singh** and I will be a junior this upcoming fall at Portland State University. I'm majoring in Biology in hopes of pursuing medical school upon graduation. I'd like to voice my thoughts on the recent revenue forecast showing extreme budget deficits and shortages following the pandemic.

Every summer since the beginning of college, I've worked part-time jobs all summer to pay for my tuition. While I receive FAFSA assistance, I still have a hefty amount to pay out of pocket. I also have a little brother in college, so my family experiences a financial strain while helping us pay for college. My plan this summer was to work as an intern at OHSU, but given the pandemic, **many internship opportunities have been placed on hold to minimize risk and exposure**. Since this would be the first summer I would not be working, *I know that paying tuition for this upcoming year would severely impact my family's financial situation.*

I was grateful to receive the CARES Act funding to help pay for my expenses this term. I found this financial assistance to reduce some financial strain, but I realize that this was available for this term and it's unknown as to how this funding will be provided in the future. I ended up receiving a much lower amount than I had requested based on the availability of the fund at our school. I am also aware of a great portion of students that weren't able to receive the amount of funding they desperately needed due to a large volume of applications.

An increase in financial assistance for college students can be extremely beneficial during this time. Given the recent economic downturn, college students all over the world are concerned about how they will afford to pay for their education. This in turn, affects their overall academic performance. I know that it has affected me a lot as well as my peers. For students that are studying full-time and have families to care for, it can get extremely difficult to work during a pandemic and a small budget capacity is not sustainable long term.

It's hard to see just how long this pandemic will last, so **I urge you to consider how these budget cuts will directly affect our education and the community around us**. Funding and financial resources are all crucial for us to succeed in our college careers and I hope that you can continue fighting for that.

Thank you for all that you do. We are all grateful for your efforts to support our community.

Dear Oregon lawmakers,

my name is **Nguyen Huynh**. I'm a student from Lane community college. My major is accounting. The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted so much of my personal finances. I realize that it is tough to get through this time mentally and financially also. In my opinion, the thing that makes people, including me, most stressed out is financial insecurity. For this reason, **I urge lawmakers to protect current funding and services related to higher education in Oregon.**

Thank you for your time and support and I hope people are doing well.

Sincerely,

Nguyen Huynh

To the Oregon State Legislature and Whom it May Concern,

I hope you are all doing as well as you can during these uncertain times, and I thank you for taking the time to read my testimony regarding the status of higher education funding in Oregon. My name is Nick Keough, and I am currently an undergrad student at the University of Oregon studying Political Science and Planning, Public Policy and Management and a former graduate of Lane Community College. I hold numerous leadership positions on the UO campus, and hold student issues and advocacy close to my heart. As a first-generation student, I have experienced first-hand the empowerment that comes with access to a higher education and I have committed myself to seeing it though that every person in the state of Oregon regardless of their identity, ability, or socioeconomic status has equitable access to our institutions of higher education just like I did. For that reason, I am writing to you today to plead that **no cuts** to higher education persist in the upcoming budget cycle and that the Oregon State Legislature commits to **fully funding** higher education in the state of Oregon.

As I am sure many of you are aware, for far too long higher education has not been fiscally prioritized in Oregon and across the country. In fact, there has actually been a trend towards disinvestment and privatization that has left many of our schools, educators and students devastated. For example, during my time at LCC, I witnessed yearly and unreasonable tuition increases, mass layoffs of faculty and staff, program cuts, and other devastating cuts due to the lack of funding from the state. Additionally, in my conversations with my fellow students I heard stories of students choosing between food and textbooks, choosing between housing and tuition, or just choosing to no longer pursue an education at all. Unfortunately, at UO the story has been quite similar. This is unacceptable, and something that is completely preventable with a shift in priority from the legislator when it comes to higher education funding. **The hardest part of getting an education should be the academics, not paying for the education and surviving while doing so.** We cannot continue to price out generations of students, many from our most marginalized communities. We must act now.

With COVID-19 and an economic recession, I am fully aware of the difficulty that may lay in the task of fully funding higher education in Oregon. Even before COVID-19, there were a lot of difficulties with meeting this need. Regardless, I don't think this should discourage us from continuing to push for a full investment in higher education and working together to get creative with how we are able to accomplish that effort. Now more than ever, it is critical that we have strong support for our community colleges and public universities as they will be crucial to economic and workforce recovery in the aftermath of the COVID-19 crisis. **An investment in students is an investment in Oregon's future and economic success, and the payoff will be tremendous.**

Our students deserve better, our educators deserve better, our communities deserve better, and the Oregon State Legislature can do better. Thank you for your time and consideration, and I look forward to continued conversation about the importance of **no cuts** to higher education in the upcoming budget cycle and committing to **fully funding** higher education in the state of Oregon.

Yours,

Nick Keough (He/Him)
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To Whom It May Concern:

My name is **Riley Edmondson** and I am a student at Lane Community College. Since the start of the pandemic, I have been out of work for over 50 days. Because I am a college student, I was denied a stimulus check, and denied unemployment. Only recently have I resorted to minimum wage food service for survival. It's not enough to catch up. We need additional assistance. I would have graduated spring term 2020, but my classes were canceled rather than moved online. My entire life is on hold. I urge lawmakers to stand by their promises and continue to center the needs of students in Oregon.

Thank you for your support and for your time.