

Hello Chair Alonso Leon, Co-Chairs Weber and Neron, and members of the Education Committee,

My name is Hannah Berger, I am a student at Treasure Valley Community College, and I am here to ask you to vote yes on HB 2590.

I want the process this bill creates to happen because I want legislators to better understand the barriers students face every day across this state. For me, housing is an extremely hard thing to come by around TVCC because of its rural location. There aren't many places to rent, and with the dorms being so limited in space, housing was a big challenge when trying to plan to attend school. A fully accessible school to me is students being able to access much needed, safe housing.

I have ran into extremely high barriers while attending post-secondary education through lack of available staff on campus. I feel as if our campus is very understaffed, throughout my time at Treasure Valley Community College I have been continuously challenged with finding an available/adequate person to help me register for needed classes. I feel that my current faculty advisor is so overloaded that there isn't adequate time to help me. COVID-19 has been another challenging barrier for me. Because of smaller class sizes, it is challenging to get a seat in a required course.

Another thing students need the chance to have in depth conversations with legislators about is financial aid. Access to financial aid resources could benefit not only myself but other students as well. I feel like sometimes we get put into situations where we have to choose to buy a book/supplies for a class or pay rent. Being a low-income student I have first hand experienced what it is like to struggle in a class because you can't afford the book for it. These stories need to be heard, and this state needs to engage in thoughtful dialogue about tackling these issues that is informed by the voices and experiences of students.

That's why I hope you vote yes on HB 2590. It's one small, simple ask-- creating a legislative task force to tour the four corners of the state and hear for students. The best way to get higher education working for all students is to pass this bill.

Thank you for your time,

Hannah Berger