



**Emily Wanous**

OSA Legislative Director

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Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Thomsen, and members of the Senate Education Committee,

For the record, my name is Emily Wanous and I am the Legislative Director for the Oregon Student Association. I am here today to ask for your Yes vote on SB 713, which would prohibit public or private post-secondary institutions of education from requiring prospective students to disclose whether they have a criminal record before the institution makes final determination whether to admit the student.

“Ban the box” campaigns have been gaining steam across the country for sometime now. As the social consciousness around formerly incarcerated folks evolves, our social systems must adapt with it. By requiring prospective students to disclose their criminal history, our institutions reinstate an unequal starting place between students who have a criminal history and for those students who do not. The societal stigma that is associated with incarceration instantly places such students at a disadvantage--unfairly placing decades old narratives on an entire population without considering the individual’s personal story and experiences.

Many advocates are referring to this movement as “Beyond the Box”, so as to emphasize that an individual is more than their record. More than their past experiences. More than the negative narrative they may be telling themselves. All prospective students--regardless of background--deserve an equal chance at an education and with that, I encourage you all to see our students beyond the box and vote Yes on SB713.

**Thank you for your time and I urge your yes vote on SB 713.**