

Good afternoon Chairs Rayfield, Steiner-Hayward, Johnson, Co-Chairs and members of the Ways and Means Committee,

For the record my name is Odalis Aguilar Aguilar and I am a third year student at the University of Oregon as well as an executive member of our recognized student government and the Oregon Student Association.

I am asking you to get serious about addressing the affordability crisis in higher education. I ask that you fund the Oregon Opportunity Grant at \$290 Million, Community Colleges at \$702M as well as fully fund HB 2835 and HB 2590. And while the cost of tuition is too high at our universities, we need our legislators to get serious about holding universities accountable to transparency and the needs and voices of students. This year has shown how little regard administrators and Boards of Trustees show to the needs and voices of students .

I've lobbied with OSA for the last 3 years and we often hear the same stories from members of this committee; that we need to figure out ways that the state can fund higher education or there's not enough money to do so, or that we need to wait our turn. I'd like to ask you today to realize that the state of Oregon can't afford to NOT to fund higher education access. Oregon as a state is highly dependent on personal income tax. It is estimated by the United States Social Security Administration that a bachelor's degree earner makes about \$450 M to \$600 M more in their lifetime than someone who does not hold a bachelor's degree. If we assume that any given Oregonian who might earn a Bachelors would fall into the 8.75% tax bracket, this means for every Oregonian who does not earn a Bachelors due to being priced out, the state of Oregon loses out on \$39,375 - \$57,312 in personal income tax revenue per individual, the University alone has over 19K undergraduate students that will graduate in the upcoming years.

Please help Oregon's future workforce by helping us sustain and get degrees, especially during COVID times. We really need students to be able to afford school if Oregon wants a promising recovery. That's why I ask you to invest \$290 M in the Oregon Opportunity Grant, \$702 M for Community Colleges, and fully funding HB 2835 and HB 2590.

Thank you for your consideration,

Odalis Aguilar Aguilar