

Hello Chairs Rayfield, Johnson, Steiner Hayward, and members of the committee,

My name is Makana Waikiki. My pronouns are she/they and I am a student at Western Oregon University.

I am asking you to fund the Oregon Opportunity Grant at 290 Million, so that all students in Oregon with a household income between \$0 and \$100,000 a year can receive a grant. I am also asking you to fund community colleges at 702 million, and fund universities at 900 million while also joining us to push forward more financial accountability over our university boards and administrations, many of which have shown themselves this year to be uninterested in prioritizing the needs and interests of the students who their institutions are meant to serve.

Even before the pandemic, students were struggling with alarming rates of food and housing insecurity, and many students were getting priced out. Oregon has let this problem worsen consistently since the 1990 passage of Ballot Measure 5. If we allow this trend to continue, the people of this state and the state economy will suffer.

We often hear from legislators that the state simply cant afford to make postsecondary education affordable. With all due respect this seems like a misguided assertion, since Oregon as a state is highly dependent on personal income tax. The United States Social Security Administration estimates 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. That means that in Oregon, estimating based on the 8.75% tax bracket, 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. We are ultimately losing state revenue by underfunding higher education.

Please reverse this trend and invest in students. Please also fully fund healthcare for our wonderful part time faculty, as well as HB 2590 and HB 2835.

Thank you for your consideration.