

Dear Chair Alonso Leon, Vice-Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the House Education Committee,

My name Marichelle Gurski and I am Director of a Student Advocacy from OSU-Cascades. I am here to ask y'all to vote yes on SB849.

As a Student Leader, I manage the ASCC Food pantry, safer living kits, and child care subsidies. I have students who come to me for assistance with food insecurity on campus. OSU Cascades did a survey, and we found out 41% reported having experienced difficulty finding affordable housing. With ASCC Advocacy, we administered a Grocery Gift Card program where we sent \$50 in grocery gift cards to over 80 students and offered physical resources from our food pantry. However, it still feels like it is not enough. Currently, we only have one faculty trained in helping students access SNAP and other need-based resources, and they do it in addition to their role as Director of Student Health and Wellness; otherwise, we have to direct students to OSU Corvallis human services resource center to get the help from their Human Resources.

From my personal experience, I have experienced first-hand food insecurity and am a recipient of SNAP. I also have received Food Stamps, which help me pay for a portion of my groceries; I think I spend around \$350 on groceries each month, and the \$200 I receive in food stamps is simply not enough to help me cover it all. I don't know financially how I would be able to go to school and focus on my studies without this vital aid. When I applied, I had to figure it out on my own by navigating confusing websites and unsure if I qualified. It would be beneficial if there were a person on staff at my college to help me navigate this process.

A Basic Needs Navigator for OSU Cascades would be a huge help in making sure students have access to food and housing to be successful in higher education. I urge the committees to support SB849.

Thanks for your time.