

Good afternoon Chair Evans, Vice Chairs Lewis and Meek, and members of the committee,

My name is Odalis Aguilar Aguilar, I sit on the Executive Committee for the Oregon Student Association and am a member of the Associated Students of the University of Oregon.

I am here today to express my opposition to HB 2237. While I can appreciate the intent of this bill and commend Rep Wilde and Rep Evans for the amazing work they do for students and their work here to support the vital operations of the Office of Emergency Management, the mechanism by which this bill seeks to advance those goals raises very serious concerns with regards to equity and higher education affordability.

There are so many ways access to the Oregon Opportunity Grant and financial aid in general are still very limited. Less than 1 in 4 qualifying students currently receives the Opportunity Grant, purely due to underfunding. Students are struggling to balance school work and class work, while 41% of students struggle with food insecurity. Requiring our most vulnerable students to spend time taking mandatory, uncompensated classes and certifications, or to perform tasks for the state in order to access the financial aid they need in order to eat, keep a roof over their heads, and attend classes, is not an equitable way to boost Oregon's emergency preparedness.

Thank you for your consideration.

Odalis Aguilar Aguilar