

Dear members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Ella Meloy and I am a second-year student at University as well as a member of Associated Students of the University of Oregon.

Today I am asking you to vote yes on HB 2919, Textbook On Time Adoption Bill, which will allow there to be transparency for students on the costs of textbooks before registering for classes, and incentivize professors and the UO Bookstore to use lower cost materials, or Open Educational Resources. This would also help improve Oregon's return on the investment of Open Education Resources if more professors and campuses use OER more broadly.

This bill would allow students to better plan for paying for higher education. These hidden fees are an equity issue. The skyrocketing expense of textbooks plays into students' ability to succeed by creating environments where students must think about the costs of textbooks, and fees related to courses instead of content and courses themselves, leaving students more vulnerable to falling behind in classes and a less secure path to graduation.

Especially with COVID-19 and the ongoing financial crisis, this bill would allow students to have more transparency and security when planning to pay for Higher Ed, and this would incentivize professors to use lower cost or free textbooks because the materials are visible to all students before registering for a course.

That's why this bill is so important to me. At the University of Oregon and other schools, textbook prices are increasing. As a Pathways student, I get my fees and tuition covered because of my financial-need (pell-grant eligibility program at UO), but I have no ability to see the cost of textbooks before registering. Some of my textbooks have been \$400 plus for a term, this is more than half my rent for a month of living in Eugene. Without knowing the prices of textbooks it's hard to budget for the term, and so I'm left making tough financial decisions that I wouldn't necessarily have to make if the prices were visible, and if the prices of textbooks were cheaper.

This bill will also move policy towards adopting more Open Education Resources, such as free online textbooks, which ultimately make Higher Ed more accessible. In our current society, Higher Ed is a huge stepping-stone to thriving and being successful in the US, this gateway needs to be as accessible as possible, this bill helps move Higher Ed in Oregon in the right direction.

Please vote yes on HB 2919, to help students like me and other students in Oregon. Thank you for your time.