

Dear Representatives Nosse, Goodwin, and Nelson, and members of the House Committee of Behavioral Health & Health Care,

My name is Yekaterina Radul, a MSW student at Portland State University, and I am contacting you today in support of House Bill 2485. Oregon needs more qualified social workers and mental health professionals and PSU is still the only public university in the state that trains clinicians.

Currently MSW and BSW students are required to complete field hours in order to graduate, the vast majority of which are unpaid and worse, students must pay PSU for credits. Over 70% of MSW students receive no compensation for their work (most of those who do receive compensation, are paid because it is their full time job). Meanwhile an MSW student will pay over \$12,000 (more than one quarter of the total tuition) to PSU for the credits associated with these field hours. In the second year of the program, PSU does not even provide any instruction to justify charging for those credits.

Charging students for their labor is blatantly exploitative and entirely unethical. This puts undue financial pressure on students, 40-50% of which rely on government assistance programs like SNAP and state healthcare.

Passing House Bill 2485 will help PSU correct this unjust financial system and create more access for students with financial barriers, especially those from diverse backgrounds.

I urge you to support House Bill 2485. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Yekaterina Radul
District 22
PSU MSW, 2024