

Submitter: Fiora Starchild Wolf  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Higher Education  
Measure: HB3089

Dear Members of the House Committee on Higher Education,  
My name is Fiora Starchild-Wolf, and I am a 20 year Enrollment Services Advisor at Lane Community College in Eugene, as well as the COPE (Political Education) Officer for our Classified Union, AFT-Oregon/Local 2417.

As a front counter advisor for students at Lane, I often hear from students who are struggling due to issues beyond academics. Many students believe they "should" somehow be able to completely handle any issues on their own, and that includes providing for themselves. However, I have all too frequently had a student at my counter or on the phone or Zoom share with me that they haven't eaten enough, or are struggling to pay for food while also going to school. This is true of students who receive full financial aid--which, even if they take out their maximum loans, putting them into debt, often are not receiving enough to live on while attending school full-time. "Why don't they just get a job?" is a frequent response to this. Well, the old maxim is true that, for every credit hour one takes, one will spend one hour with direct classtime, but will need at least 2 hours outside of class for study, homework, projects, etc. So, a full time student, taking 12-15 credits per term, will need 36-45 hours per week to spend fully engaged with their coursework. It's hard to study when you're hungry!

Many of our students, in addition to part-time or full-time school, are also working at least one outside job, often 2 or even 3.

This impacts their academic progress, their ability to really learn what they are in college to gain, and their sense of ability to achieve their goals.

After hearing the stories--the Marine veteran who wanted to be a writer, completing his papers on a laptop he charged at a coffee shop, so he could go back to his tent and write. But having difficulty doing so because of his growling stomach. The single mom with three children at home, trying to stretch her SNAP, a community food box, and her financial aid, but ending up the last week each month feeding her kids dry cereal for breakfast and boxed mac and cheese for dinner--and just sneaking a few bites for herself of what's left.

Or the young student who is supporting himself, or trying to, and either not having family support, or coming from a family who would like to, but cannot afford to put him through school, much less cover their living expenses....and the student doesn't want to let them know that he can't go grocery shopping that week.

I think that food insecurity is one of the most challenging things to many students' persistence in school, and I hope that you will make history by passing the "Hunger Free Campus" bill into law, helping our colleges and universities to better support our

students' basic needs so that they can succeed in their educational goals.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Fiora Starchild-Wolf, MS Ed

Enrollment Services Advisor and Early Outreach Success Coach

Lane Community College