

Submitter: Taylor Sarman  
On Behalf Of: AFT-Oregon  
Committee: House Committee On Higher Education  
Measure: HB3115

Chair Lively, Vice Chairs Ruiz & McIntire:

For the record, I am Taylor Sarman here on behalf of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Oregon. On behalf of AFT's over 18,000 members, including faculty at Oregon's community colleges and public universities, I'm happy to be here in support of HB 3115.

As many of you are aware, AFT-Oregon has spent the last decade working to respond to what many AFT members refer to as the "adjunctification" of Oregon's higher education system. Put plainly, we have seen universities and colleges over rely on these highly qualified and trained adjunct faculty members because they often do not have to provide benefits (like retirement, healthcare, etc) or equitable wages to these workers that they would be required to if they were hiring more full-time and tenure track faculty.

This shift has resulted in very dire circumstances not only for AFT-OR members, but unfortunately for the students they serve. The American Federation of Teachers recently released a report highlighting some of these impacts felt by the thousands of adjunct faculty members represented by AFT across the country. The report, appropriately titled "An Army of Temps", found particularly concerning results for the work and living conditions of adjunct faculty members who are integral parts of ensuring students' learning outcomes. Of note the report found that:

One-quarter of respondents earn less than \$25,000 annually.

Only 20 percent report being able to comfortably cover basic monthly expenses. Fewer than half of survey respondents have access to employer-provided health insurance, and nearly 20 percent rely on Medicaid.

Nearly 45 percent of faculty members surveyed have put off getting needed healthcare, including mental health services, and 64 percent have forgone dental care.

48 percent struggle with job security, reporting that they don't know if they will have a teaching job until one month before the beginning of the academic year.

For 3 out of 4 contingent faculty, employment is only guaranteed from term to term. A plan for a secure retirement is out of reach for most contingent faculty, with 37 percent reporting they don't see a path to retirement.

HB 3115 would help correct many of these challenges by helping ensure that our colleges and universities make progress to more full-time faculty positions that come

with the basic benefits that so many of us can take for granted.

Ensuring that our educators can meet their basic needs translates into additional time and energy that can go into make sure students get the attention and individualized learning they deserve. The fact that adjunct faculty members are able to serve students now is nothing short of remarkable given the dire conditions so many adjunct faculty members are in.

HB 3115 is an important concept to help further the conversations about the need for more full-time faculty members and undoing the “adjunctification” of our higher education system.

On behalf of AFT-OR, I'd like to thank Rep. Hudson for his work on this bill and share AFT's strong support for HB 3115.