Submitted by Andy Milward, MSW
March 12, 2023

In Support of Senate Bill 572

Dear Chair Dembrow & Members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Andy Milward, and I have been involved with the Career & Community Studies Program at Portland State University since 2018—first as a social work intern, then later as a staff member. I am writing to you today in support of **Senate Bill 572: Inclusive Postsecondary Education for Youth with Intellectual Disabilities.**

My love for the Career & Community Studies Program is both personal and professional. What started as a nine-month internship assigned to me by my social work education program has turned into a dream career and passion.

I cannot emphasize enough the massive change I have seen students undergo while in the program. Over and over again, I have watched self-doubt turn into confidence, fear turn into hope, and helplessness turn into agency. College makes all of this possible for a population that, too often, is kept out of the workforce, and kept out of fully engaging with their community.

Yet, CCS is the only program of its kind in the state of Oregon, and we are at capacity. Working in admissions, it has pained me to turn down very strong candidates, knowing we are their only option for inclusive higher education in this state.

CCS needs to continue, and it needs to expand to other public institutions in the state. Too many young Oregonians with intellectual/developmental disability do not get to lead fully productive and inclusive adult lives because the services they need just do not exist. Only 33% of transition-aged youth with IDD in Oregon have competitive, integrated employment, compared to a whopping 81% of CCS graduates. The passing of this bill would usher in a brighter future for many young people in Oregon.

For these reasons and many more, I ask the Honorable Members of the Senate Education Committee to **vote yes on Senate Bill 572**.

Thank you for your time and service to the people of Oregon.

Sincerely,
Andy Milward