

Chester Novitt

Oregon State Legislature, Testimony Form

Agenda: Community College Funding Support

April 19, 2023

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Oregon's seventeen (17) community colleges. Community colleges allow flexible scheduling for students to attend college while working or raising a family. This flexibility comes in many forms, from night classes to asynchronous coursework, which was essential during the pandemic.

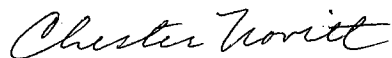
As for my testimony, I am a high school science educator seeking to transition to a career in nursing. At my age, it would have been unimaginable to pursue a nursing degree with the tuition expenses of a private school. To illustrate this point, I was accepted into an Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing (ABSN) program at Linfield University. However, tuition for their 16-month program exceeded \$100,000, of which I was awarded \$30,000 in scholarships.

Instead, I am very grateful to have been accepted at Mt. Hood Community College and to be pursuing my second career in nursing. Mt. Hood Community College offers affordable tuition and dedicated teachers who advocate for their students. My tuition expense will be approximately \$20,00, of which I have already received \$6000 in scholarships. Although my trajectory will take a little longer to earn a BSN, my current employer, PeaceHealth SW Medical Center in Vancouver, Washington, will contribute funding towards higher education after completing this program. Since I already have a bachelor's degree in science, I am considering bridging toward a master's degree in nursing, which would afford me opportunities in nursing administration or teaching. These ambitious intentions would not be possible were it not for community colleges empowering students to pursue their dreams.

Furthermore, many of my classmates come from diverse backgrounds and settings. I am proud that our school supports low-income or first-generation college students and those from underrepresented minority groups. Given our low tuition and widespread accessibility, community colleges are key to expanding higher educational attainment and boosting skills in this country, which can provide an important avenue for upward social mobility.

If you have any questions about my experience at Mt. Hood Community College, please get in touch with me with the provided contact information.

Sincerely,



Chester Novitt

Mt. Hood Community College, Nursing Student

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