

Submitter: Dahlin Allen  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Measure: SB5506

(I was not called on for in-person testimony and so here is my written submission.)

My name is Dahlin Allen and I live in Eugene, Oregon. I am a University of Oregon student. As you are making important budget decisions this legislative session, I encourage you to support Oregon's students through robust investments in public higher education, including funding the Public University Support Fund (PUSF) at \$1.05 billion and increasing the Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG) by \$200 million.

Why? Let that soak in for a second.

That's how I want to start.

How many people here are in college or have been around a college (university, community college, etc.)? Please raise your hand high and look around you.

How many people here wouldn't have their jobs today without college? Please raise your hand again and look around you again.

We need to better fund colleges to stop potential increases in tuition. This proposed 2.5% decrease in higher education funding is unacceptable.

As a first-generation college student - first person in my family to go to a college to pursue a Bachelor's Degree. College to me is the key to a better life and future.

For those of you have a college degree you know that college isn't cheap!! A lot of people have to take out thousands and thousands of dollars in student loans, scholarships, and grants to pay for it. The Oregon Opportunity Grant is one of those grant programs that over 40,000 Oregon students rely on. Some people are lucky to have a parent or relative be able to pay for college for them. But most people are broke and stay broke going to college. They have to work multiple jobs to be able to pay rent and for food. College is expensive and hard!

So then, why make something that's already unreachable for most, more unreachable? Why mess with people's hopes and dreams? Why lower funding for higher education? You're most likely causing college tuition to increase. Why not find ways for college to be more accessible and affordable? Don't we want more people to have good jobs like you all, our state legislators? Let's do better.

I respectfully request that you find that money to fully fund the PUSF at \$1.05 billion and the Oregon Opportunity Grant at \$400 million. Thank you.