

Submitter: Nia Alvarado

On Behalf Of: Computer Science Students

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education

Measure: HB5025

As a student from both a university and a community college, I urge you to support bill HB5025. This bill is crucial for preserving programs such as computer science program at our community college, which is currently facing the threat of closure due to low funds. The impact of this closure would be devastating, especially for low-income students like myself. I am heartbroken to see the loss of the computer science faculty who have been there for me as a woman and minority in STEM. Yet, since our school can no longer sustain the funding for these faculty members salaries we will forever be losing these amazing people who have helped so many.

First and foremost, funding is the lifeline that allows students like me to pursue higher education. Without proper funding, education becomes inaccessible, and opportunities for academic advancement are severely limited. Many low-income students rely on community colleges as an affordable pathway to higher education. Losing the computer science program at our community college due to lack of funds would mean losing an invaluable opportunity for students who aspire to pursue careers in the tech industry.

Furthermore, the closure of the computer science program would result in the loss of highly skilled and dedicated staff who have tirelessly worked to support student success. These educators have nurtured and mentored students, providing them with the guidance and knowledge needed to excel in the field of computer science. Losing these invaluable resources would not only negatively impact the education of current students but also deprive future students of the opportunity to learn from experienced professionals.

In addition, the computer science program at our community college serves as a critical pipeline for underrepresented groups, including students from marginalized communities, to access careers in the tech industry. By closing the program, we risk further exacerbating the diversity gap in the tech industry, limiting opportunities for underrepresented students to pursue high-paying jobs and contribute to the innovation and growth of the tech sector. I believe there is an overall need for not only funding but reformation of all aspects of our education system. We are paying tuition that can increase as much as 8% per year in some cases and students are not wanting to attend school as they cannot afford this on top of our cost of living. As a member of student leadership at both LBCC and OSU I have seen what this can do to a school and have spoken with many students who rather not go into debt and risk their mental health. I am sure you are aware of our crisis and are familiar with students experiences, however, there is something that must be done about this long term. We will not progress as a society if we are losing valuable individuals due to lack of education because they cannot afford it.

In conclusion, the passage of bill HB5025 is crucial for preserving and creating

programs at our colleges. Keeping and getting people into school. It is not just about saving a program, but about supporting the dreams and aspirations of low-income students who rely on affordable educational opportunities. It is about retaining highly skilled staff who are dedicated to student success. It is about fostering diversity and inclusion in the tech industry. I urge you to support bill HB5025 in order to support those of us who would not even receive a higher education without funding. Thank you.