



American Association of University Professors

Academic Freedom for a Free Society

Senator Meek, Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

February 12, 2024

Re: Senate Bill 1542 - Oppose

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the Committee,

On behalf of the more than 6,300 members of the American Association of University Professors in Oregon, our collective bargaining chapters at the University of Oregon, Portland State University, Oregon State University, and Oregon Institute of Technology, and our faculty members in advocacy chapters across Oregon, we urge you to oppose SB 1542.

Due to waning investment from our state over the last 25 years, Oregon's students, staff, and faculty have faced increasing financial challenges. For Oregon's students, plummeting state support has directly led to skyrocketing tuition and educational loan debt borne by students and their families. For staff and faculty at Oregon's public institutions of higher education, diminished state funding has resulted in lower wages, declining working conditions, and a lack of stability in employment. Whereas a university job was once a pathway to the middle-class that allowed our members to buy homes, raise families, send their children to college, and save for retirement, Oregonians who feel called to work in higher education now find themselves locked out of these core tenets of the American dream.

The passage of SB 1542 would only exacerbate these issues and cause harm to present and future Oregonians. Higher education can ill afford the inevitable reduction in funding that would follow reducing this important funding stream. Furthermore, the future economic prospects of our state will be dampened if the next generation of working professionals are not able to receive the high quality education necessary to enter the corporate workforce.

For the good of our state and Oregon's public universities, we urge you to oppose SB 1542.

Thank you for your consideration.

Victor Reyes
Executive Director, AAUP Oregon