

Submitter:

Chris Mock

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB604

As an instructor for the Strong Start program at Western Oregon University, I have seen firsthand the profound impact it has on underrepresented students as they transition to college life. This program provides critical support through mentorship, skill-building, and community engagement, helping students navigate academic and social challenges with confidence. I have watched students who might have struggled instead thrive, persist, and ultimately succeed in their college journey. In my professional experience, programs like Strong Start improve retention and graduation rates, ensuring that all students have the opportunity to reach their full potential. Continued funding is essential to maintaining this vital support system and fostering a more inclusive and equitable campus.