

Submitter: Jennifer Lantrip

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce
Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3183

My name is Jennifer Lantrip, and I am a librarian at Pacific University. I am writing in support of HB 3182 and HB 3183: The Student Basic Needs and Workforce Stabilization Act, which will make important investments in student basic needs initiatives, affordable student housing initiatives, and textbook affordability.

I worked closely with Open Oregon Educational Resources as a librarian at Umpqua Community College from 2014-21. Open Oregon was essential in the creation and support of UCC's textbook affordability program, saving students \$315,000 during 2019-21 -- a one hundred percent increase from the previous biennium.

As state funding for education has decreased, institutions have fewer resources and stability to provide these supports. However, these supports really matter to our students. Students often have to purchase textbooks out of pocket at the beginning of the term because financial aid is often not enough to cover these costs. Two thirds of community college students are food insecure, half are housing insecure, and 13-14% are homeless.

I have worked with many students experiencing these things – who live in their cars or between friends and family members' couches, who do not have family as a financial support cushion when small emergencies arise and, in fact, whose families and parents often rely on them for financial support during emergencies.

When students drop-out because they can't recover from small financial emergencies, they are left with student debt and no degree enabling them to pay it back, making their situation worse. And we know that this happens and that textbook costs negatively affect our students: A survey of OSU students found that 61% of students did not purchase their textbooks because of high costs, 44.5% took fewer classes, 18% have dropped courses, and 14% withdrew from a course. Historically underserved BIPOC students reported a greater negative impact of high textbook costs.

Open Oregon has an excellent track record of bringing results. Each program dollar spent is multiplied many times in savings for students and compounds year after year. This investment will make a huge difference to Oregon's students and Oregon's future. From 2021-23, through the work of Open Oregon and faculty and support staff across the state, 900,000 students in 50,000 course sections saved ~\$70 million on course materials costs in two academic years. The no- and low-cost course materials

designations in the schedules are making a difference and students are using them to find courses with lower-cost materials.

Thank you for considering this. I hope I can count on your support of HB 3182 and HB 3183 to support students' basic needs so that they can work toward their educational goals.