

Submitter: Elizabeth DeFranco
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Chairs Lieber and Sanchez, Vice Chairs Girod, Gomberg & Smith, and members of the committee,

I am a TRIO advisor at Southern Oregon University and I am writing in strong support of HB 2997, which will establish a designated grant fund within HECC to support college access and success programs for underserved students in Oregon.

As a TRIO professional, I get to work with first generation students, low income students, and students with disabilities all of whom benefit from a little (or a lot) extra support navigating the overly complicated world of higher education. It is important that programs continue to exist so folks who were not lucky enough to be born into a family who have the knowledge, values, and means can still choose to pursue higher education and the subsequent opportunities available upon obtaining a bachelor's degree.

Programs like TRIO have helped countless students navigate financial aid, succeed academically, and persist to graduation. Without sustainable funding, many students will lose critical resources that support their college journey.

I urge you to support HB 2997 to ensure that these essential programs continue to serve students across Oregon. Thank you for your time and consideration.