

Submitter: Tammy Dowd Shearer
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3182

February 13, 2025

To: House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development

From: Tammy Dowd Shearer

RE: Support for HB 3182 and 3183

Chair Hudson, Vice Chairs Fragala and Harbick, and members of the committee,

My name is Tammy Dowd Shearer and I am the Basic Needs Coordinator and an adjunct faculty member at Portland Community College. I am writing in support of HB 3182 and HB 3183: The Student Basic Needs and Workforce Stabilization Act.

In my 25-year career in higher education (20 years at PCC), I have witnessed first-hand how basic needs insecurity impacts students. In a 2023 survey, 64% of PCC students reported experiencing food and/or housing insecurity. When students are worried about how to pay for their medical care, when their next meal might be, or where they will sleep at night, they struggle to focus on their studies, leading to academic setbacks and lower completion rates.

Conversely, I have seen how access to basic needs services and resources can positively impact a student's ability to complete their certificate or degree. In my current role, I oversee the PCC Basic Needs Hubs and the Peer Resource Navigator internship program. This program assists PCC students with accessing food, housing, healthcare, childcare, utility assistance, and other campus and community resources that help them stay in school and reach their academic and career goals. In the five months since we launched this program, PCC Peer Navigators have assisted over 300 students! The Basic Needs Hubs are making an impact, but they currently operate with money from grants and donations; additional funding is needed to sustain this program and its vital services.

I urge you to support HB 3182 and HB 3183 because these bills not only help students, they are also an investment in the future of our great state. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Tammy Dowd Shearer