

Submitter: Holly Schiefelbein
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3182

Chair Huson, Vice Chair Fragala and Harbick, and members of the committee,

My name is Holly Schiefelbein, and I am writing to express my strong support for HB 3182 and HB 3183. As a community college instructor, I have seen firsthand how food insecurity, housing instability, lack of child care, and financial strain disrupt students' ability to succeed.

In my time teaching, I have had students fall asleep in class—not out of disinterest, but from working overnight shifts just to afford rent. I have seen students disappear mid-term, later revealing they had been evicted and had nowhere to study. I have also had parents in my courses struggle to attend required lab sessions because child care fell through at the last minute, forcing them to miss essential hands-on learning.

More than once, I've had students bring their young children with them to lecture, doing everything they could to stay engaged while juggling parenting and academics. While I always welcomed them, no student should have to balance a notebook on one knee and a toddler on the other just to access their education. These students are dedicated, hardworking, and determined, but without support for basic needs like housing, food, and child care, the barriers they face become insurmountable.

These stories are not rare. They reflect a systemic issue. Nationally, community college students experience some of the highest rates of housing and food insecurity, and Oregon is no exception. When students are forced to choose between feeding their families and staying in school, education becomes an impossible luxury rather than a pathway to opportunity.

HB 3182 and HB 3183 are necessary investments in Oregon's future. By ensuring students have access to the basic resources they need, we are not just helping them stay in school—we are strengthening our workforce, our communities, and our economy. When students can focus on learning instead of survival, they complete their programs, enter the workforce, and contribute meaningfully to Oregon's success. I hope for a future where I no longer need to have conversations with students about having to choose between keeping a job which keeps a roof over their head and their education, their ticket to a better more stable life. Our students deserve better. We are all lifted up when we support everyone's ability to pursue their education.

I urge you to pass HB 3182 and provide students with the support they need to thrive.
Thank you for your time and consideration.