

Phillip Kim

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Michelson Center for Public Policy
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Chair Hudson, Vice Chairs Fragala and Harbick, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Phillip Kim, and I am the Senior Advisor of Education and Equity at The Michelson Center for Public Policy. I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB 3182 and HB 3183, the Student Basic Needs and Workforce Stabilization Act.

After over a decade working for course material affordability, I have seen how the high costs of textbooks can shut students out of the opportunities that higher education offers. The work of our organization started when our founder, Dr. Gary Michelson, learned of a group of community college students about to end their education due to the high cost of their learning materials. He stepped in to help with their immediate need, but has been dedicated to finding a long term solution and fixing the root cause of this injustice by promoting the adoption of open educational resources (OER).

Oregon has already saved students millions through OER programs, and if expanded, could save them even more. Other state's investments in community college OER programs saved students seven dollars for every dollar spent while improving their outcomes in the classroom.

The Student Basic Needs and Workforce Stabilization Act will:

1. Provide **Benefit Navigators** with programmatic budgets to connect students with housing, food assistance, and other essential resources.
2. Expand **affordable student housing initiatives**, ensuring no student is forced to choose between rent and their education.
3. Invest in **textbook affordability** by supporting Open Educational Resources, reducing financial barriers to learning.

We must secure equity and opportunity in higher education and ensure that no student is left behind because they can't afford food, housing, or textbooks.

I urge you to pass HB 3182 and HB 3183—because education should be about learning and thriving, not surviving.

Thank you for your time and leadership on this critical issue.

Sincerely,

Phillip Kim
Senior Advisor of Education and Equity
Michelson Center for Public Policy