



To: House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development

From: Oregon Education Association

Re: Support for HB 3182 and HB 3183 (2025)

Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Education Association represents about 4,000 faculty and staff (including benefits navigators) at 11 different community colleges across this state. I am writing in support of HB 3182 and HB 3183: The Student Basic Needs and Workforce Stabilization Act.

If passed, these bills would make a targeted and strategic investment of a little over \$22 million dollars in three key areas:

Student Basic Needs Programming

- \$10 million dollars to support Benefit Navigators at Oregon's colleges and universities with basic needs programming funding to expand basic needs support programs, infrastructure, and personnel.

Affordable Student Housing Initiatives

- \$6.5 million dollars to College Housing Northwest to support access to housing and rental assistance for Oregon's college and university students.
- The creation of a Student Housing Task Force to investigate barriers students face to accessing affordable housing and make recommendations on policy changes that increase student access to affordable housing.

Textbook Affordability and Open Educational Resources

- \$5.2 million to Oregon's statewide textbook affordability program, Open Oregon Educational Resources, to continue expansion of no-cost, low-cost textbooks and course materials across Oregon's colleges and universities.

Passing these bills and investing in these programs will help students get the support they need to thrive.

Additionally, many of the students and staff on campuses are not aware of the benefits that may be available to them. The work that benefits navigators do across this state to connect students and staff in need to the programs that may help them is game-changing. We must ensure that the benefits navigator program is not only continued but expanded.

Finally, you'll hear from one of our members at Clackamas Community College about her experience using The Open Oregon Educational Resources (OER) grant program. Her story is not uncommon – faculty all across the state use OER to help reduce financial barriers for students. Sustaining and expanding this program will help more and more students not have to choose between buying academic materials and paying for their rent or food.

Kevin Sullivan

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OEA urges your support for HB 3182 and HB 3183.

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