

**From:** [Olivia Tatom](#)

**To:** [Rep. Helt](#)

**Subject:** Written Testimony for HB 3357

**Date:** Monday, April 1, 2019 5:10:10 PM

---

Dear Representative Helt,

I am writing in support of HB 3357 to create a tax credit for child care expenses for degree-seeking college students. I am a full-time college student at Central Oregon Community College and the father of two young children. I also serve as president of the COCC nursing class of 2019 and as the parent representative on the Central Oregon Early Learning Hub's Early Learning Leadership Council. My 4-year old attends pre-school, my 7-year old attends a before and after school program, and between the two of them my wife and I have nearly \$1200 in monthly child care expenses. While we are able to afford this without great difficulty (we would not qualify for the proposed credit), the cost of high-quality child care is a significant hardship for many of the students in my nursing cohort. Their attendance and grades suffer because they must work to pay for child care. Others delayed college enrollment because they could not afford child care. Currently, there are federal tax incentives and state subsidies in place to assist working parents, but little support for parents who wish to pursue higher education. Some community colleges and universities offer child care on campus with financial support to low-income students, but neither COCC nor OSU-Cascades currently does so. This prevents low-wage workers from returning to school to earn degrees that might help them qualify for higher-wage jobs, and surely contributes to the year-over-year enrollment declines our colleges and universities are seeing. In its current form, HB 3357 would offer significant relief to parents of young children seeking a college degree and I urge you and your colleagues in the legislature to pass it.

Sincerely,  
(via email)  
Oliver Tatom  
PO Box 7921  
Bend, OR 97708