



# Oregon Student Association

March 20, 2019

To: Senate Committee on Education  
From: Ana Sally Gonzalez Barragan  
RE: SB 958

Chair Wagner , Vice-Chair Thomsen and Members of the Committee,

My name is Ana Sally Gonzalez Barragan and I am a second year student at Western Oregon University, and I am here with the Oregon Student Association to urge your support of SB 958.

Senate Bill 958 would allow me students like me to benefit from state-funded loans. I am a DACA student who has been in Oregon since the first grade. I often compared myself to my older brother and friends, who are US citizens. When it came time for applying to schools I thought that I could have the privilege of being picky about what school I wanted attend just like my friends. I served as an advisor for the Oregon Board of Education, met white house staff, and even spoke at my graduation; surely I could choose what school I wanted to attend. However, soon enough I came to the realization that I did not have that privilege. I discovered that my only option was either not pursuing my education at all or looking for a school that was not as expensive and still applying for as many scholarships as I could. I decided on the second option because I could not vision my life without an education.

And so I did. I applied to every single scholarship I could find and finally had enough to attend a more affordable school with one of the best education programs. However, right as I was purchasing items to decorate my dorm, I got notice that my scholarship of \$25,000 did not come through because of a miscommunication in my school. I spent the entire summer with my uncle and brother applying to loans. I received rejection after rejection because I was not a citizen even with a co-signer who was a citizen. I continued searching even during my freshman week, which I should've spend meeting new people. I almost gave up until I was informed of a private company called Sallie Mae. Through them I was able to take out a loan of \$15,640 with an almost 12% interest rate just so that I could meet the requirement of living on campus the first year. I was so desperate in paying for my education that I had to fall victim to a loan company that took advantage of my status and gave me a large interest that is compounding interest at this very moment.

Somehow I had what I feared. I thought that if I worked hard even I could attend school at a reasonable number. Now I will have to continue paying this loan back in the future with a teacher salary. If SB958 was available when I needed it, I would not have fallen victim to such an aggressive loan company, and my only focus would be my own education.

This is why I support SB958, and encourage this committee to pass it.

Please remember my story when voting on this bill. Thank you for letting me speak with you today.

## **OREGON STUDENT ASSOCIATION**

The Oregon Student Association (OSA) is a statewide, student-led advocacy and organizing non-profit established in 1975 to represent, serve, and protect the collective interests of students in postsecondary education in Oregon

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Sincerely,

Ana Sally Gonzalez Barragan

Western Oregon University

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