

Chair Alonso Leon, Vice Chairs Neron and Weber, and members of the committee,

My name is Makana Waikiki and I am the chair of the Incidental Fee Committee at Western Oregon University. I am here to ask you to vote yes on HB 3012.

It is my honor to serve within student government on our Fee Committee because I have seen first hand the way the student fee benefits students. This fee is unique in that it is the only amount of money students pay to the university which students have democratic control over. Because of that, it is uniquely equipped to meet the needs of students. The fee pays for student jobs which student employees rely on for income. This fee also provides compensation for student government representatives, ensuring that low-income, BIPOC, and other marginalized students on campus can participate in our student government processes without a lack of compensation for time and labor being a barrier. It also ensures student groups and clubs can provide shared community spaces for WOU students to find support, community, education, and new vital experiences. Clubs and groups such as the student newspaper, the Black Student Union, ASWOU, the Art and Design Club, MECHA, the Multicultural Student Union, the American Sign Language Club, Spanish Club, the non-traditional students club, Veterans Resource Center, Abby's House, and so many others provide vital spaces for WOU students. This is all because of student control of the incidental fee.

That's why I was so alarmed this year, as multiple attempts have been made by the WOU administration to block our ability to collect this fee, as is our legal right under ORS 352.105. We had done our due diligence as a fee committee to go through our proper process and get input from students, and we had followed the law as well as our own bylaws; we had done our jobs and done them well. And yet the administration blocked our attempts to collect this fee. What ensued was myself and other student leaders having to pour countless hours into asserting our rights through negotiations with administrators who were often unwilling to be transparent and collaborative, consulting with the Oregon Student Association for support, and reaching out to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission through submitting appeals which were then withdrawn after administrators reversed course and accepted our fee at the eleventh hour. This same process played out two terms in a row, causing much frustration and confusion for WOU students and student leaders. This all could have been avoided had HB 3012 been in place at the time. HB 3012 closes the loopholes and clarifies the vague passages existing in ORS 352.105 in a way that helps both administrators and students follow the law in line with its original intent, which is empowering students. Please vote yes on this bill.

Thank you.

Makana Waikiki