

Hello to the Education Committee,

My name is Skyelar Cribbs and I am a student at Portland State University.

I am here to ask you to join our students in supporting HB 2590, the Student Voice Bill.

This bill is all about making sure our colleges and universities work for all students and can help us graduate and get good paying jobs. Right now, our campuses aren't equipped to help everyone succeed.

In my experience, our school currently, like many institutions, group together Pacific Islander and Asian voices. While our cultures have similarities, we have completely different issues we face. We would like separate community areas. Secondly, our campus does not allow full access to resources and has driven prices up by small percentages at a time. This issue makes accessibility and accommodations very limited and forces students to drop out while debt rises. We need accountability from faculty and more affordable pricing. Another issue that our school lacks is priority registration to active participants of the campus organizations. An example is cheer: I currently reside on the PSU cheer team and we receive no benefits or recognition for the dedication and time we put into building up our PSU community and engaging in student involvement. The BARE MINIMUM they could provide to students who are engaging in a better PSU experience is priority registration. Additionally, as a student of color, barriers to accessible and affordable higher education are endless. One example of how to fix things would be to mandate that professors who teach BIPOC studies to be BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and other people of color) so they can be teaching us the hardships and history that we have experienced and not white professors. While they may be qualified, it drowns out the voices of BIPOC people and their struggles in the communities they reside in.

What would help me most is accountability. PSU has put itself in debt trying to make upgrades and furthers the hardship onto its students, knowing that FASFA does not help everyone financially and scholarships can be limited. We see the small percentage raises that go up year by year increasing in-state and out-of-state tuition to cover the cost of debt.

There are many students with many different needs being met. This bill can help change that by creating a special committee to tour our campuses and look at what is working, and what is not working. This process would create an opportunity for students like me to be heard, that's why it is so important that you vote yes.

We really need to get college right in Oregon, because the future of our economy depends on it. The Oregon Employment Department projects that between 2019-2029, occupations that require higher levels of education for entry will grow fastest.

Please remember my story when you vote on this bill, and please join me in supporting HB 2590.

Thank you for your time,

Skyelar Cribbs