

Hello Chair Alonso Leon, Co-Chairs Weber and Neron, and members of the Education Committee,

My name is Summer Townsend, I attend Treasure Valley Community College, and I am here to ask you to vote yes on HB 2590, the Student Voice Bill.

I want to see this bill pass because I want to see Oregon get serious about creating postsecondary education opportunities which are inclusive of all cultures. Going into higher education is a culture shock for minorities, so I want a campus that has a Native cultural center, hispanic cultural center, and even more. One barrier I have faced in my education is misinformation around scholarships for Native American students. Personally, my tribe is not recognized and more and more tribes are becoming less recognized so we don't make the scholarship cut.

If we could figure out a way to make sure the needs of underrepresented students are met in higher education, it would help decrease the equity gap. Minorities specifically leave their family and cause a financial deficit. A lot of minorities come from low-income families so they are strictly dependent on grants, scholarships and other forms of money. These grants would keep minorities in school and able to graduate, which is the goal for HECC.

There are so many inequities and barriers that I want state legislators to be aware of. That's why it's so important to me that you pass this bill, so that we can ensure the voices of students across Oregon are listened to.

Thank you for your consideration, and please vote yes on this bill.

Best,

Summer Townshend