

March 7, 2021

To the Education Committee,

I am writing in support of SB 235, 234 and 756.

I am an instructor at **Portland State University** and an education volunteer at **Coffee Creek Correctional Facility**.

The bills in consideration would provide essential support to improve and expand existing college programming in Oregon's prisons, and will ensure that Oregonians in custody can make use of federal dollars from Pell Grant restoration.

We all recognize the power of education to transform lives and impact families for generations. As a first-generation college student from rural Oregon this has proven true for me. I see that transformation happening for the students at Coffee Creek, where women have been advocating for many years for more educational opportunities.

Oregon is far behind other states in offering college degree pathways for their citizens in custody. These bills offer an important step forward and would benefit all Oregonians by harnessing the power of education to transform individuals and communities.

Thank you for your consideration,

Dr. Deborah Rutt