

March 18, 2021

Oregon House Education Committee
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 2412, -2 Amendments

Chair Alonso Leon and Members of the House Education Committee,

I'm writing today to urge your support and adoption of the -2 amendments to HB 2412. This amendment includes funding for five different college access programs that were funded in the Governors Recommend Budget. These five programs provide valuable access and supports for low-income and historically underserved students and help them to achieve their post-secondary goals.

I am an OR TRIO alumnus- Talent Search, Upward Bound Math Science and Student Support Services. Today, I hold a Master's in Social Work and have worked at the policy level of fields of early learning, higher education and aging and disability in our state. The TRIO pipeline helped me succeed in high school, get accepted into college, secure scholarships, then supported me through my undergraduate years to ensure I graduated.

As the first person in my family to attend higher education, the planning for and surviving the 'college world' would have been impossible if it were not for the supportive programs of TRIO. The programs provided personalized academic advising, college success courses, financial aid and planning advice, scholarship opportunities and workshops, tutoring, volunteer opportunities, and access to faculty, staff, and student mentorship and support networks.

Even before the pandemic hit there was a need for greater investments in education support programs that work and that need has only grown. The population that TRIO serves -- students who traditionally struggle to overcome class, social and cultural barriers to higher education -- will now have greater needs for support. Please support Gov Brown's leadership in investing in much needed services for first generation, low-income youth and adult learners. Thank you for your support of TRIO programs.

Sincerely,
Nicole Ward
Portland, OR