

**Associated Students of Portland State University**  
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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 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 Governor's Recommended Budget. These five programs provide valuable access and support for low-income and historically underserved students to help them to achieve their post-secondary goals.” I am an alumna of the program, and I currently serve as a Peer Mentor for the Cohort 5 scholars. I've seen students grow and flourish within the program because they're provided with opportunities many have struggled to obtain on their own, but through the Exito platform their granted access to various resources and a vast network of professionals from various STEM fields, who holistically want to see these scholars succeed in life. It’s important that this program continues to exist to provide students from marginalized communities a platform to prepare them to pursue a STEM field because the number of services that support marginalized communities has always been limited when they should have been funded more to help more students from marginalized communities overcome obstacles that prevent them from pursuing STEM fields.

I am the product of the notorious Build Exito Program at Portland State University. This program has changed my life in numerous ways because the program curriculum, staff, and community have supported me to grow into the student leader and community advocate I am today. I currently serve as the student body president for the Associated Students of Portland State University (ASPSU), a Student Health Advisory Board member for our on-campus health service department, a Steering Team Lead for our Reimagine Campus Safety Committee, and various other community-leadership positions. The main reason why I am able to do what I'm doing now is that the Exito program does more than just teach students and help them feel like they belong. The program encourages scholars to look up to change-makers and become one ourselves. Challenging societal norms start with a dream from a scholar who has always wanted to change a specific process but never was given the platform or support to do so. This program not only prepares students from marginalized communities to pursue STEM fields, but it's preparing the next generation of societal change-makers who will make the world better in the various disciplines scholars are pursuing like within medicine, research, public health, engineering, psychology, etc. with one scholar at a time.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Motutama N. Sipelii  
ASPSU Student Body President