

Date: April 15, 2021

To: Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner-Hayward, and Rayfield, Co-Vice Chairs, and members of the committee

My name is Holly Smyth. I am a student at Rogue Community College in Medford. I am writing to request your support for HB2835.

Having a benefits navigator on campus would help myself as well as fellow students in so many ways. The things that they have already helped me with have already changed my life as well as the way I engage in school. They have helped me with books, gas and even connected me with the employment office who helped me gain a carrier. As a single parent and sole provider for my little family anything helps, every single dime. When I first started this journey before gaining Brandon as a navigator, I was struggling so hard to make ends meet. I was on the bus, day in and day out making minimum wage literally barley making it paycheck to paycheck. I honestly have hardly any worries now. The STEPS Program real has changed my life. Living paycheck to paycheck is one of the worst things to experience with a young child. Covid has left me unemployed but because of this program I became employed in less than 2 months with a carrier as a Pathfinder for Jackson County Community Correction. For the first time in my whole life, I make more than min wage. I don't even want to think about where I was before being awarded into the STEPS program, nor do I even want to think about what my future would be like without them. The passing of this bill would give so much more hope for future college students as well as myself.

Holly Smyth

Rogue Community College, Medford, OR.