

4/0/21 To: Co-Chairs Johnson, Steiner-Hayward, and Rayfield, Co-Vice Chairs, and members of the committee.

My name is Charlotte Navarre. I am a registered nurse and retired faculty of a Family Medicine Residency Program in Milwaukie. I am requesting your support for SB 5555.

A benefits navigator on campuses across Oregon will have a tremendous and positive impact on a student meeting basic needs such as food and housing and allowing them to meet their educational goals.

As a nurse and educator of 40 plus years, I know first hand the impact of food insecurity, inadequate stable housing and the inability to access other basic needs has on health, mental health, and educational and vocational success. Handing a patient or a student a list of resources just doesn't work. The landscape of shifting program funding, requirements, and paperwork that comprise our "safety net" is simply overwhelming for most to tackle on their own.

Healthcare settings have been using on-site navigators and warm hand-offs to community-based navigators with great success for a number of years. It's an evidence based model that works, has high participant and provider satisfaction, positive outcomes, and is cost-effective. It will work in higher educational settings as well.

There are many hurdles to attending a community college or university many Oregon citizens need to overcome. Completing that educational journey can also be challenging. Not having enough to eat, living in a car, not being able to access health or mental health care shouldn't be a part of that journey. We owe it to these students: they are Oregon's future.