

Hello to the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Claire O'Connor and I am the Senate President of the Associated Students of the University of Oregon.

I am here to ask you to join our students in supporting full funding for HB 2590, the Student Voice Bill.

This bill is all about making sure our colleges and universities work for all students and can help us graduate and get good paying jobs. Right now, our campuses aren't equipped to help everyone succeed. In my experience, the biggest barriers I have run into have been financial ones. It has been difficult to juggle the cost of school, cost of living, and the drawbacks of how much I've had to work in order to afford my degree. What would help me is a campus fully accessible to my needs that would be actively aware of its students and work to provide basic needs access through programming and services. The University of Oregon currently does not have these programs but with the new budget being passed by ASUO; hopefully it will soon. This focus would greatly help me simply because it will bring more attention to all of these issues.

This bill would highlight student voices like mine by creating a committee that would look at what college campuses are lacking in terms of the systems put in place for underrepresented student academic success.

We really need to get college right in Oregon, because the future of our economy depends on it. The Oregon Employment Department projects that between 2019-2029, occupations that require higher levels of education for entry will grow fastest.

Please remember my story when you vote on this bill, and please join me in supporting full funding for HB 2590.

Thank you for your time,
Claire O'Connor