

Hello, my name is Jessica King and I work at Oregon State University where I support graduate students from admissions, through enrollment, all the way to graduation, and sometimes beyond. I have worked at Oregon State for nearly 10 years. Throughout the time I have worked at OSU I have seen our institution strengthen and grow through the number of students we enroll and graduate each year, the services and resources we are able to offer them, the on-campus living options, and the majors and degrees they can pursue.

COVID-19 has changed a great deal of our reality. While a majority of faculty, staff, and students have been able to pivot and change their work and learning from in-person to online, some of our staff were not able to make this transition, due to the essential nature of their jobs in supporting our students.

Some of our students are international, and due to the lockdown of our country as well as others, were unable to travel home. Some of our students didn't have the money to travel home for spring break, let alone move back home during the onset of a pandemic. Some of our students don't have a physical place they can call home. During the onset and through the continuation of this pandemic, our students who live on campus in the dorms have been supported by custodians and food service workers.

When our state went into lockdown and restaurants were forced to close, our food service workers continued to cook nutritious and affordable meals for our students. While stores ran out of toilet paper and cleaning products, our custodians made sure that our students' living areas were clean and sanitized and that they had toilet paper available. These essential frontline workers kept our universities going and our students safe, however, these workers have yet to be recognized for their fortitude and service during a pandemic.

Our food service workers have faced extreme upheaval in their services. This pandemic has largely affected the amount of people on our campuses, leading to drastically reduced customer levels at our campus eateries, and that impacts staffing levels--how many are needed and how many can they afford. With a drop in customers, our food service workers faced reduced hours in Spring 2020. When paid COVID-19 leave was made available, classified staff at OSU and other campuses were told to use this leave to make up for their reduced hours. When it became clear that summer camps and events would not be happening on campus, the layoffs for food service workers came at the end of Spring 2020.

Now, a year into this pandemic, some of these essential workers have little or no paid leave available. They are using sick time or vacation leave to be able to get COVID testing or to get their vaccines. In some cases, they are taking leave without pay to be able to protect themselves and their loved ones against COVID-19. And, again, these workers are facing layoffs at the end of Spring 2021--a year later.

Our custodians, who are literally on the front lines, have not seen any hazard pay. They are working mandatory overtime on the weekends, with little time available to them to be able to rest, to care for themselves and their families. The stress and working conditions have led to

people leaving these jobs, resulting in the understaffing of our custodial staff, and multiple custodians have contracted COVID-19.

These are our essential workers who are striving to keep our students safe during this pandemic. Essential worker pay to our custodians and food service workers at OSU is important. It recognizes the disruptions they have faced in their lives, as well as the interruptions they have experienced in their livelihoods, due to this horrible pandemic. It is the least we can do to show our appreciation.

As legislators, I urge you to please:

- Fund the Public University State Funds at \$900 million for the next two years (2021-23)
- Fund SB551/HB 3007 (Part-time faculty health care bill) to provide part-time and adjunct faculty health care options at community colleges and universities
- Fund HB 2835 (Student navigators on campuses bill) to assist students in finding housing, childcare, and food resources, which are the cornerstones of their educational successes
- Fund HB 2590 (Student voices on campus bill) to ensure the needs of our rural students, BIPOC students, and their families are fully served by our institutions through a comprehensive review of higher education in all four corners of this great state

Thank you for your time.