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Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Thomsen, and members of the Senate Education committee,

For the record, my name is Emily Wanous and I am the Legislative Director for the Oregon Student Association. **I am here today to urge your support on HB2542 with -2 amendment.** This bill would require every public university and community college to prominently display mandatory fees charged each quarter, in addition to providing an annual report to the HECC detailing the breakdown as to how such fee revenue was allocated on campus. We have worked closely with community colleges, universities and the HECC to come to an agreement on reporting guidelines that would work for all stakeholders. The -2 amendment is what came out of those conversations.

As tuition and fees continue to increase in Oregon, it is more important than ever for students to have access to clear and accessible information regarding the total cost of attendance in order to financially plan for their college career. When discussing transparency, tuition is touched on far more in affordability conversations considering its majority stake in higher education cost and thus, other areas of campus governance, such as mandatory fees, are often a secondary thought. Since 1999, nationwide mandatory fees have increased 30% faster than tuition--which is why mandatory fee usage is gaining considerable attention from students, faculty, and higher education advocates across the country.

[According to Richar Vedder](#), an Ohio University professor and director of the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, "this is a way to try to disguise the actual price of college". While this may not be an intentional thought behind the increased charging and creation of mandatory fees, it does raise concerns around how such revenue is allocated on campus and how much accountability is currently in place to ensure the ways fees are spent are inline with the fee description area. For example, money collected under a "technology" fee should, on principle, be dispersed for technological purposes only. If moneys from such fees are going toward on-campus reserves, then students, legislators, and the public should be aware.

In addition, this bill would bring Oregon closer to best reporting practices utilized in neighboring states, such as Washington. Currently, there is a large disparity between the information on mandatory fees available in Oregon compared to Washington. While I recognize the two states work within two different systems, the fact that students, legislators, and the public deserve to know how fee revenue is allocated on campus does not change across State lines.

With all this being said, we look forward to working with stakeholders on final language. Thank you for your time and **I urge your "yes" vote on HB2542 with the -2 amendment.**

Resources:

1. Report from California State University, titled "[The Mandatory Fees Its Campuses Charge Receive Little Oversight Yet They Represent an Increasing Financial Burden to Students](#)" published in May 2020
2. Referenced above, [HECC Mandatory Fee Historical Data](#)
3. Referenced above, [Example Fee Reporting: Administration Support Cost Fee from CWU](#)