

Testimony of Summer Townsend

Treasure Valley Community College

Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education

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Oregon Legislative Assembly – Microsoft Teams

Public Hearing

My name is Summer Townsend, I attend Treasure Valley Community College, and I am here in favor of Senate Bill 5528.

I want to see this bill passed because of how much Oregon Community College has helped me as a minority student. Being a member of an underrepresented Native American tribe, my minority status and the negative narrative that comes with it has been an uphill battle within the education system. However, due to choosing an Oregon Community College, I have been able to afford higher education, remain fairly local, and have received the appropriate recognition from faculty/staff and administration.

Treasure Valley Community College has never looked at me as just a number, they have accurately addressed the cultural differences that I may face. They have also acknowledged my ethnicity with understanding a support. Through the professional relationships that I have formed as a student with faculty/staff and administration, I have been supported beyond measure. The small campus size has enabled me to create lasting networks with genuinely caring people. If it were not for this Oregon Community College I would not be as successful as I am.

Community colleges are important to minority students and students of color, such as me, because it allows them to rewrite the negative narratives. Through community colleges, minority students can afford a higher education in order to go beyond the stereotypes that society labels them with. Community colleges can minimize or even eliminate the culture shock that students of color and varied cultures may experience.

Due to the importance of continual support for community colleges within the state of Oregon, I believe that Senate Bill 5528 should not be looked over. It is so important to me that this bill is passed, so that we can ensure minority students and people of color have the opportunity to also chase their dreams.

Eyahen (Blessings to you),

Summer Townsend