

Chairs Frederick, McLain, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Phoebe Brown, and I am from Tillamook, Oregon. I'm a Sports Lottery Scholarship recipient and a cross country and track athlete at Portland State University.

Financial aid programs like sports lottery matter to me because without them my teammates and I wouldn't be able to fully embrace or participate in what we love. While I'm not just an athlete, running and competing are my therapy. They are my go-to for bigger life challenges. They are my connection to a wonderful, passionate community. A community that strives to set an example of equity, teamwork, and pride for the larger community of Portland. Not only is my athletic department working to provide support for our community, so are the student athletes themselves. Through our Student Athlete Advisory Committee (SAAC), we have created conversations around diversity, inclusion, mental health, and community service. This whole last year has shown me just how much my sport supports the rest of my endeavors.

Currently, I am a third year undergraduate Honors student, but after I earn my Bachelor of Science in Pre-Clinical Health Sciences, I plan on volunteering abroad, hopefully in a health capacity. After, I will be attending graduate school for Physical Therapy, though I'm not sure where I'll be going yet. However, I know that my background in sports will help me get to wherever I need to be.

Sports Lottery Scholarships play an important role in supporting student athletes, and graduate students. Student athletes make incredible contributions to our state, and funding intercollegiate athletics and academic scholarships through the Sports Lottery has a proven positive effect on enrollment, retention and diversity for about 3,000 students every year at Oregon's public universities.

Sports Lottery funding recognizes that not all Oregonians find their way to higher education through the same route, or have the same needs once they arrive on campus. As a student athlete from the rural Oregon Coast, I know how difficult it can be for rural students to pave a path to college. Funding for programs like the Sports Lottery Scholarships help students from underrepresented backgrounds afford college and complete a degree.

Growing up in Tillamook, which you may know as the land of cheese, trees, and ocean breeze, teaches you to be resilient and to plan for the future – our dairy, timber, and fishing industries depend on it. I hope you and your colleagues will plan for our state's future by making meaningful investments in funding for public education and student financial aid, including Sports Lottery Scholarships.