



Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Thomsen and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Emily Wanous and I am the Legislative Director for the Oregon Student Association and I am here in support of HB3225, which would help ensure barriers are removed for workers in our education system to access the Federal Student Loan Forgiveness Program.

Oregon students are well aware of the burdens created by student loan debt. Inadequate funding of higher education has forced far too many students to rely on student loans in order to access an education. For this reason, the Oregon Student Association supports measures that will help reduce barriers for folks trying to access programs to address the student loan debt crisis.

HB 3255 is exactly that – Providing adequate information about the federal student loan forgiveness program and an employee's eligibility is a critical first step at encouraging educators to enroll in this program.

Additionally, the -1 amendment will remove barriers that adjunct instructors face in enrolling in the Federal Student Loan Forgiveness program – by crediting instructors for 3.35 hours for every 1 hour of instruction. Students know first-hand that instructors spend a significant amount of time working with students in office hours, grading coursework, and preparing for class. The language in the -1 reflects that work and ensures it is counted towards their eligibility for the federal student loan forgiveness program.

On behalf of the Oregon Student Association, I urge the committee to pass this important piece of legislation.