

My name is Mary Martindale and I am a student at Treasure Valley Community College in Ontario. I am writing to request your support for HB 2835. Having a Benefits Navigator on campus is important to me because if it wasn't for my Benefits Navigator, I would not have been able to go back to college at all. I have a teaching degree but the only type of job that I have been able to find is substitute teaching. Last year my husband passed away. I wanted to go back to school to train for a job that would be able to support me and my two children. However, I did not want to take out another student loan. I already owe \$30,000 in student loans. A Benefits Navigator from my school introduced me to the STEP program. As a result I have been able to train for a Medical Assistant certificate free of charge. I am looking forward to graduating in June and finding a better paying job. My benefits Navigator has been helpful to me in finding much needed governmental support such as SNAP, LIHEAP, and other governmental programs that help ease my financial burden until I can become independent financially. My Benefits Navigator has also been a good friend to me by supporting me after my husband passed and helping me with some of my tougher classes. Thank you.