

Hello to the Education Committee,

My name is Zee Brady Brewer and I am a student at Portland State University.

I am writing today to ask you to vote yes on HB 2524, which would create mandatory fee transparency at all public colleges.

I paid \$503 in fees last term, with a \$44 refund received in Fall. I did not know how much I would be paying in fees this term. You find out when it's on your bill. You find out about COVID refunds after they hit your bill. They will say it's for building fees or whatnot but they won't say the reasoning or give access to any of the minutes from the student fee committee, the recommendation sent to the dean, etc. Everything is withheld from the students and most just accept that this is a part of tuition but less than 5% know where it is going.

I was voted in as a Student Fee Committee representative of Student Leadership in May 2020. I didn't find out until after a 3 day orientation what the mandatory fees were and how they were allocated. I actively tried to push for transparency in fees and I campaigned on that. Every time I spoke with administration I was told the university would not make it public until the PSU website was redone. This has been in the process for about a year now and I think this information is deliberately withheld from students. It is one of the reasons I resigned.

Since they increased fees by 5% or so it was unexpected and caused me to receive less financial aid making it so I had to petition my landlord for rent reductions.

I had intended to stick around through December of 2019 but when I brought up that our budget advisor was giving information against certain rollovers "this is unprecedented" or "this is less of a refund for the students" and not others, I felt the vote had become biased and the SFC was going with his recommendations. I know the student fee committee would have gotten the Cultural Resource Center \$10k electronics funding had he not done it, and I thought he was supposed to be impartial. Given that the university had been pressuring the student fee committee to make certain cuts to mandatory fees, as well as not allowing rollovers for diverse fee funded areas, not only felt unethical but discriminatory. I resigned that day. Minutes for this meeting aren't publicly available, as they are supposed to be legally, so one would need to make a public records request just to get information on decisions made relating to mandatory fees. I was informed they would need to go through Portland State general counsel.

HB 2542 is about transparency and accountability at our colleges, so that students can have the information they need to manage their finances better and succeed in school.

Thank you for your time. Please vote yes on HB 2542.

Sincerely,

Zee Brady