



Emily Wanous

OSA Legislative Director

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Dear Chair Alonso Leon and members of the House Education Committee,

For the record, my name is Emily Wanous and I am the Legislative Director for the Oregon Student Association.

I am testifying today to urge your “yes” vote on HB2542. This Bill would require every public university and community college to prominently display mandatory fees charged each quarter, in addition to providing an annual report to the HECC detailing the breakdown as to how such fee revenue was allocated on campus. As tuition and fees continue to increase in Oregon, it is more important than ever for students to have access to clear and accessible information regarding the total cost of attendance in order to financially plan for their college career. When discussing transparency, tuition is touched on far more in affordability conversations considering its majority stake in higher education cost and thus, other areas of campus governance, such as mandatory fees, are often a secondary thought. Since 1999, nationwide mandatory fees have increased 30% faster than tuition--which is why mandatory fee usage is gaining considerable attention from students, faculty, and higher education advocates across the country.

[According to Richar Vedder](#), an Ohio University professor and director of the Center for College Affordability and Productivity, “this is a way to try to disguise the actual price of college”. While this may not be an intentional thought behind the increased charging and creation of mandatory fees, it does raise concerns around how such revenue is allocated on campus and how much accountability is currently in place to ensure the ways fees are spent are inline with the fee description area. For example, money collected under a “technology” fee should, on principle, be dispersed for technological purposes only. If moneys from such fees are going toward on-campus reserves, then students, legislators, and the public should be aware.

In addition, this bill would bring Oregon closer to best reporting practices utilized in neighboring states, such as Washington. Currently, there is a large disparity between the information on mandatory fees available in Oregon compared to Washington. While I recognize the two states work within two different systems, the fact that students, legislators, and the public deserve to know how fee revenue is allocated on campus does not change across State lines. For example, I have provided a [link](#) in my written testimony that displays a report of the Administration Support Cost fee usage at Central Washington University as an example. Currently, the HECC only has two graphs detailing tuition and fee increases from 2010 to today on their website for the entire State. This was the only information regarding fees that I could find on the HECC’s website.

In crafting this Bill we are working on engaging stakeholders such as community colleges, universities, and the HECC in order to more clearly outline what the mandatory fee annual report to the HECC would include. OSA hopes we can all come to agreed upon final language. We will give the Chair updates as we move along in this process.

With all this being said, we look forward to working with stakeholders on final language. Thank you for your time and **I urge your “yes” vote on HB2542.**

The two charts below detail the annual tuition and fee rates at Oregon’s community colleges (example 1) and Oregon’s public universities (example 2). These charts can be found on the HECC’s website under [Mandatory Fee Historical Data](#).

Example 1:

Annual in-district tuition and fee rates

For full-time students in Oregon community colleges
2010 to present.

Academic year	Tuition and fees unadjusted for inflation	Tuition and fees adjusted for inflation (2019 dollars)
2010-11	3,720	\$4,322
2011-12	4,126	\$4,672
2012-13	4,369	\$4,874
2013-14	4,537	\$5,009
2014-15	4,640	\$5,062
2015-16	4,774	\$5,187
2016-17	4,904	\$5,284
2017-18	5,172	\$5,453
2018-19	5,399	\$5,536
2019-20	5,629	\$5,629

Source: HECC Office of Research and Data, 2020

Example 2:

Annual tuition and fee rates for full-time students in Oregon public, 4-year universities

2010 to present

Academic Year	Resident tuition and fees, unadjusted for inflation	Resident tuition and fees, adjusted for inflation (2019 dollars)	Nonresident tuition and fees, unadjusted for inflation	Nonresident tuition and fees, adjusted for inflation (2019 dollars)
2010-11	\$7,073	\$8,218	\$19,247	\$22,364
2011-12	\$7,611	\$8,618	\$20,279	\$22,961
2012-13	\$7,949	\$8,867	\$21,998	\$24,540
2013-14	\$8,088	\$8,930	\$22,766	\$25,136
2014-15	\$8,305	\$9,060	\$23,690	\$25,843
2015-16	\$8,764	\$9,524	\$24,927	\$27,090
2016-17	\$9,115	\$9,822	\$25,736	\$27,732
2017-18	\$9,664	\$10,188	\$26,968	\$28,431
2018-19	\$10,111	\$10,368	\$27,860	\$28,568
2019-20	\$10,704	\$10,704	\$29,243	\$29,243

Source: HECC Office of Research and Data, 2019

Resources:

1. Report from California State University, titled [“The Mandatory Fees Its Campuses Charge Receive Little Oversight Yet They Represent an Increasing Financial Burden to Students”](#) published in May 2020
2. Referenced above, [HECC Mandatory Fee Historical Data](#)
3. Referenced above, [Example Fee Reporting: Administration Support Cost Fee from CWU](#)