

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

My name is Kathleen Rodríguez Pérez (she/they) and I am a 3rd-year student studying Ethnic Studies and English at the University of Oregon.

I am here to ask you to vote yes on HB 2919, the Textbook On-Time-Adoption Bill.

The summer before I came to Eugene for school, I had worked two jobs in order to save up for all of my expenses that I would have while I attended school. Due to my status as a foster kid, I did not and still do not have familial support to help me financially. I relied heavily on what I earned - which was minimal - over the summer to help me pay for school expenses. At some point I realized I could not afford to pay for all of my expenses and required course materials, especially when many of the books were only available at University of Oregon's bookstore which is known for its steep prices, with my summer savings. I had made the decision to change my meal plan to the cheapest one in hopes that I would receive a refund check in order to help me pay for my books. I did not have the funds to pay for 7 separate books that collectively cost me hundreds of dollars..

HB 2919 will allow there to be transparency for students when purchasing their books. Students should not have to choose between their next meal and a textbook. And while we are unable to control the textbooks professors use in their classes or their prices, we should at minimum give students the opportunity to see the prices of textbooks beforehand so they can budget for the textbook way beforehand and in some cases, can proactively choose courses that fit within their budget.

My story is not unique, and with tuition and fees rising every year--with no end in sight--we need to create policy that will encourage and incentivize more thoughtful decision making around student's finances. HB 2919 can help make that better. This is already statute in our neighboring state of Washington. It's time for Oregon to address the textbook affordability crisis.

Please vote yes on HB 2919, and thank you for your time.

Best,

Kathleen Rodriguez Perez