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On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Higher Education  
Measure: HB3089

HB 3089 Hunger Free Campuses  
Hearing Testimony 02/07/2023  
For: Chair Lively and House Education Committee  
From: Maria Alejandra Gallegos- Chacon (they/them)

Good afternoon, Chair Lively and members of the Committee. My name is Maria Alejandra Gallegos and I am a proud alumni of the University of Oregon, and former student body president of ASUO.

My freshman year I was directed to go to the “campus” food pantry and I went, but it was closed. Much to my surprise, it turned out that it was only open Wednesdays and Thursdays from 3-5pm - that’s right a total of 4 hours a week. I returned the following day, and when I got there I was disappointed to find out the pantry only carried canned goods and moldy cheese. This disheartening experience led me to student organizing to establish a better way to fight hunger. Here’s what I learned:

We knew we had to make a case for the expansion of a food pantry. So we rolled out a survey to assess the food and housing insecurity: heres what we found  
50% of the student body said they were experiencing some level of housing and food insecurity

34% of students said they experienced food insecurity everyday  
12% said they experienced houselessness

With this proof that food insecurity was a prevalent and common issue for students- we began organizing, negotiating, and fundraising to try to expand the food pantry’s service hours and to bring it to campus (bc it wasn’t even remotely close to campus). During my tenure as President- our team did manage to secure \$85,000 for the expansion, due to the hard work of countless students, professors, and my vice presidents Imani Dorsey and Ivan Chen.

However, this was in 2019, and nothing has changed. The food pantry is still off campus and only open 4 hours a week, and students are limited to only one visit a week.

You see, it’s really easy for student campaigns to lose momentum, accountability, and funding due to the nature of student turn over.

Which is why I think HB 3089 is a smart and practical way to go. Having qualifications

to ensure these institutions are actually prioritizing hunger relief in order to receive funds is exactly the kind of oversight and accountability they need to make a difference. I promise students all across the state from community colleges to the big three, are advocating and coming up with mutual aid solutions.

But we still need your help to make sure every student has a shot at succeeding. I urge you to vote yes on HB 3089, because it's the right thing to do. Thank you for your time and consideration.

#### REALLY NOT FUN FACTS ABOUT OREGON:

According to the 2019 HOPE Center's Real College survey, among Oregon community college students, 63% of respondents identified as food insecure, housing insecure or homeless.

According to the 2019 #RealCollege Survey, among Oregon community college students:

Indigenous students experience food insecurity at 59%

Black students experience food insecurity at 50%

Latinx students experience food insecurity at 46%

Transgender students experience food insecurity at 61%

Nonbinary students experience food insecurity at 62%

Student-parents experience food insecurity at 50%

If all low-income Oregon students were connected to SNAP that would mean over an additional \$2.5 million per year in direct basic needs support