



Safe and Inclusive Intercollegiate Activities Fairplay – HB 2472

02/28/2023

Chair Lively, Vice Chair Ruiz, Vice Chair McIntire, and members of the committee,

My name is Nick Keough, and I am the Legislative Director of the Oregon Student Association. **I am writing you all today to ask for your support on HB 2472.**

Oregon Student Association advocates for the collective interests of students in postsecondary institutions in Oregon. This includes the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of students. We strive for our campuses to be safe, inclusive, and welcoming to all Oregonians – regardless of a student’s race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, religion, primary language, and/or disability.

While we know all our public universities are committed to this ideal and each institution has some level of a commitment to equity and inclusion, we know there is still work to create a culture on our campuses that is safe and welcoming for our most marginalized students. With HB 2472’s focus on addressing discriminatory and harmful behavior at intercollegiate activities, particularly sporting events, HB 2472 would help our campuses get closer to their commitments to equity and inclusion for all.

The focus on intercollegiate activities, with an emphasis on sporting events, is much needed. Just within the last five years, there have been multiple reported instances of hateful behavior at college sporting events. For instance, in the February of 2019, [Black USC basketball players were called racial slurs and derogatory names by Oregon State University fans](#). More recently, in September of 2023, [University of Oregon fans chanted anti-Mormon taunts at a BYU football game](#) – which became a matter of national news and embarrassment. While these are just a few examples of incidents that we happen to know about, it can be stressed enough that there are surely incidents we do not know about.

As is often the case in situations such as these, there is typically minimal levels of accountability for those who are promoting hate and partaking in discriminatory behavior. Largely, this is a result of weak reporting systems, and a lack of process for addressing complaints and implementing sanctions towards verified accounts of hateful behavior and discriminatory language that infringes on the rights of others.

It is for these reasons that the Oregon Student Association supports HB 2472: the Fairplay Bill.

Oregon’s public universities should be required to develop specified policies and accountability mechanisms for behavior at intercollegiate activities, and all athletic department personnel should be trained on such policy to ensure the safety of our students, our athletes, and all community members.

The Oregon Student Association urges you to support HB 2472: the Fairplay Bill

Thank you,

Nick Keough
Legislative Director, Oregon Student Association
nick@orstudents.org

OREGON STUDENT ASSOCIATION

635 NE Dekum St, Portland, OR, 97211 | (817) 889-0787 | www.orstudents.org | @OregonStudents