



# Open Oregon Educational Resources

03/14/2023

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 3121.**

Oregon Student Association advocates for the collective interests of students in postsecondary institutions in Oregon, and works to make higher education affordable and accessible. As I am sure the members of this committee are aware, higher education in Oregon has an affordability crisis. Not only have tuition, mandatory fees, and housing costs skyrocketed in prices far above inflation, but the cost of textbooks has become a significant financial barrier to students across all our post-secondary campuses. To hear the amounts that University of Oregon students are paying, I encourage you to watch this [Tik Tok video](#) where UO students report paying sometimes 300-450 dollars for a single textbook.

While the cost of textbooks is a small dollar amount compared to the total cost of attendance, research shows that seemingly small, unpredictable expenses can create a financial emergency that limits student success and increases student debt. A [recent survey](#) of Oregon State University students found that of all the respondents: 61% did not purchase their textbooks because of high costs, 44.5% took fewer classes because of textbooks costs, and 14% withdrew from a course because of textbook costs.

When it comes to meaningfully addressing the textbook affordability crisis, investing in Open Oregon Educational Resources (OER) is our most powerful tool. Our statewide program, [Open Oregon Educational Resources](#), promotes textbook affordability for community college and university students, and facilitates widespread adoption of open, low-cost, high-quality materials. Since 2015, no-cost/low-cost materials created with grants from Open Oregon Educational Resources saved students \$17 million. Despite Open Oregon Educational Resources demonstrated track record of leveraging state resources to save money for students, Oregon significantly underinvests in the program and textbook affordability.

**It is for these reasons that the Oregon Student Association supports HB 3121.** Not only do our student leaders feel that this bill and funding will help address the problems highlighted above, but we strongly feel that this investment in Open Oregon Educational Resources will have an immense return on investment. Spending on textbook affordability has a multiplier effect such that each \$1 in state funding spent can save students from \$3-\$30, year after year. Financial aid rarely stretches to cover course materials, so funding for affordable textbooks is an essential component of a comprehensive statewide affordability strategy. **The Oregon Student Association urges you to support HB 3121.**

Thank you,

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**OREGON STUDENT ASSOCIATION**

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