Chair Lively, Vice Chair Ruiz, Vice Chair McIntire, and members of the House Higher Education Committee,

For the record my name is Hibah Hammad, and I am a Senior at the University of Oregon. I study Sociology and Spanish, and I am the Chapter Chair of the OSPIRG Students UO Chapter. Today, I am writing in support of HB 3121! OSPIRG is a student-led and student-funded political organization that focuses on providing students with the knowledge and skills needed to create real change and fight for what we believe in, whether on or off campus. This year, at the University of Oregon, we have been running our Textbook Affordability Campaign that focuses on bringing more attention to Open Educational Resources and fighting for the expansion of resources and grants to support these programs.

Before transferring to the University of Oregon, I attended Portland Community College. Transferring from a community college that understood the diversity of its students and their different needs to a more traditional public university was jarring. I went from professors that always tried to find the cheapest or freest textbooks and course material options to attending classes that made me spend over $200 for a single textbook. Upon further research, I found out that $3 billion in financial aid goes to purchase course materials and 3 publishers control 80% of the market, which is why I can't do homework for certain classes without getting specific textbooks and their access codes! Education is already something that is so inaccessible to students, especially marginalized students of color, which is why I believe greatly in the importance of Open Educational Resources and their role in education equity.

I hope to see the Oregon legislature pass HB 3121 to take meaningful steps to expand education equity for all.

Thank you for your time!

Hibah Hammad
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