

I am here to provide testimony supporting HB3120-2, on behalf of the Oregon TRIO Association at Portland State University. I am a recipient of TRIO and I want to express the importance of this program and continued funding. I was close to having to drop out of university without a place to live. The support from TRIO helped me continue my education and this term I will be graduating with my bachelor's degree! I am a first-generation student who was not given access to education until I was 14 years old. There are many people with limited resources who are struggling, and TRIO makes a big difference. I am requesting the continued support of the TRIO programs to continue helping those who are struggling to fulfill their dreams and become successful members of society. Sometimes these programs mean the difference between students becoming successful instead of living in poverty. As someone who escaped a neglectful situation from Mexico, I know the value of education, and I know it takes a lot to gain an education. Many of us dream of gaining an education and becoming successful yet we do not have the resources. My journey to this point has been a struggle and TRIO helped me continue my progress. Both the funds and the other forms of support have made a very large positive impact on my life. I remember the first time I was told I was selected to receive a grant; I had a hold on my account because of a due balance and I was receiving emails from the housing department stating that I needed to move out. As someone who does not have a family and who struggles with medical problems as well as a disability, this was extremely scary. When I received the call stating that I was selected for a grant, I started crying because it means so much for my wellbeing and education.

I hope my testimony will help the deciding parties understand the enormous impact HB 3120-2 has made in our lives and I earnestly hope vulnerable students can continue to receive support so they can more fully contribute to society and build our future.