

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

My name is Scott Vignos, and I serve as the Vice President and Chief Diversity Officer at Oregon State University. Today, I am here on behalf of Oregon State University and the Oregon Council of Presidents to express our support for House Bill 3565 and its mission to establish the Oregon Tribal Student Grant program.

The legislature's allocation of one-time funding in 2022 to establish the Oregon Tribal Student Grant program was a significant milestone in reducing the barriers to higher education faced by tribal students throughout the state. I am particularly grateful to Oregon's Tribal and Indigenous communities, education partners, the legislature and Governor Brown for their work in establishing this program last year.

At OSU alone, we are pleased to share that 80 students have received a cost of attendance grant through this program during 2022-2023 academic year. Students benefitting from the grant program are enrolled at our Corvallis campus, our campus in Bend and through Ecampus, which provides needed flexibility for students in Tribal communities. This investment has undoubtedly facilitated the academic, personal, and professional growth of these students, representing a crucial step towards empowering Tribal students and contributing to inclusive, community prosperity across the state in the short- and long-term.

However, the use of one-time funding has left an unresolved question regarding the program's sustainability, creating uncertainty for recipients and undermining our commitment to support our Tribal communities. We must ensure that this program's long-term sustainability aligns with our responsibility as a state and institutions of higher education. It is our shared duty to provide our students with the confidence and assurance that they will have continued support throughout their academic journeys.

Therefore, I respectfully call on you and your colleagues to support House Bill 3565, which will establish the Oregon Tribal Student Grant program permanently, fund it for the next biennium, and foster trust with Tribal communities in Oregon. We must commit ourselves to the success of Tribal students by providing them with the resources they need and deserve to thrive in Oregon's institutions of higher education.



Oregon Council of Presidents

**OCOP**

Thank you for your time and consideration, and I urge you to pass House Bill 3565.



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