



American Association of University Professors

Academic Freedom for a Free Society

March 23, 2023

Representative Lively, Chair
Members of the House Committee on Higher Education
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Re: House Bill 2265 and -1 amendment - Support

Chair Lively, Vice-Chairs McIntire and Ruiz, and members of the Committee,

I am the Director of AAUP Oregon, and I was an Oregon State University instructor for more than a decade. On behalf of the more than 6,300 members of the American Association of University Professors in Oregon, our collective bargaining chapters at the University of Oregon, Portland State University, Oregon State University, and Oregon Institute of Technology, and our faculty members across Oregon, I ask that you please support HB 2265 and the -1 amendment.

Oregon's institutions of higher education are in crisis, and the cause is clear. Our state is 48th in the nation for higher education funding, and as state support for higher education evaporated, university administrators sought budgetary savings by slashing staff and faculty wages and positions. Worse still, the burden to fund our universities has too frequently been borne by our students through increasing tuition costs and decreasing levels of services and support. The result of these legislative and administrative choices is ballooning student debt, declining enrollments, and increasing barriers to student success.

The current state of affairs can be changed, and the taskforce established by HB 2265-1 represents a clear opportunity for the university community to re-examine Oregon's approach to higher education funding. Through the collaboration of a representative group of stakeholders, AAUP Oregon is confident that such a taskforce can identify a better path forward for the students, staff, and faculty at Oregon's institutions of higher education.

Thank you for your commitment to supporting higher education in Oregon.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Victor Reyes'.

Victor Reyes
Director, AAUP Oregon