

Date: March 23, 2023

To: Senate Committee on Education
From: Ali Shaw, Portland State University
RE: Support for SB 416 and Pay Equity

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ali Shaw, adjunct professor of Entrepreneurship in Publishing at Portland State University, and I am writing to express **support for Senate Bill 416**, which will help bridge the widening gap between the pay for part-time and full-time faculty members in our higher education system and bring better equity, stronger retention, and increase overall outcomes for students.

As a business owner in the publishing industry for 17 years, I was invited to teach this course due to my expertise and ability to help future freelancers, publishers, bookstore owners, literary agents, and more learn how to make a living through successful entrepreneurship.

However, in order for me to teach this class, I must take less work through my business, and the low adjunct pay actually leads to me taking a pay cut. Although I'm happy to do this now for the sake of helping students, realistically I cannot continue it for more than a few terms because my family needs my income.

I am not the only adjunct professor in this position. Many, many adjunct faculty cannot stay in their teaching positions for more than a few terms because of the low pay, which is especially low when considering the level of education and expertise required to teach these classes. High turnover hurts the schools, departments, and the students, but it is unavoidable without professional rates. And the schools know this for full-time faculty, which is reflected in the pay rates for those professors. Part-time faculty also have extensive, relevant expertise—and, in the case of entrepreneurship, current business ownership expertise is even more relevant—and deserve to be paid accordingly.

I urge you to vote yes on SB 416. This bill adds a pay ratio between full-time and part-time faculty that is a first step toward improvements to our higher education system that will benefit students, faculty, departments, the educational institution, and the community.

Sincerely,

Ali Shaw
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