



March 23, 2023

Chair Dembrow, Vice Chair Weber, and members of the Senate Education Committee:

As the elected president of American Federation of Teachers-Oregon and on behalf of AFT-OR's over 18,000 members, including faculty at Oregon's community colleges and public universities, I'm happy to share AFT-OR's strong support of SB 416.

As many of you are aware, AFT-Oregon has spent the last decade working to respond to what many AFT members refer to as the "adjunctification" of Oregon's higher education system. Put plainly, we have seen universities and colleges over rely on these highly qualified and trained adjunct faculty members because they often do not have to provide benefits (like retirement, healthcare, etc) or equitable wages to these workers that they would be required to if they were hiring more full-time and tenure track faculty.

This shift has resulted in very dire circumstances not only for AFT-OR members, but unfortunately for the students they serve. The American Federation of Teachers recently released a report highlighting some of these impacts felt by the thousands of adjunct faculty members represented by AFT across the country. The report, appropriately titled "[An Army of Temps](#)", found particularly concerning results for the work and living conditions of adjunct faculty members who are integral parts of ensuring students' learning outcomes. Of note the report found that:

- One-quarter of respondents earn less than \$25,000 annually.
- Only 20 percent report being able to comfortably cover basic monthly expenses.
- Fewer than half of survey respondents have access to employer-provided health insurance, and nearly 20 percent rely on Medicaid.
- Nearly 45 percent of faculty members surveyed have put off getting needed healthcare, including mental health services, and 64 percent have forgone dental care.
- 48 percent struggle with job security, reporting that they don't know if they will have a teaching job until one month before the beginning of the academic year.



- For 3 out of 4 contingent faculty, employment is only guaranteed from term to term.
- A plan for a secure retirement is out of reach for most contingent faculty, with 37 percent reporting they don't see a path to retirement

SB 416 would help correct many of these challenges by helping ensure that our colleges and universities pay part-time faculty at the same rate per hour that they would full-time faculty. Put most directly, the passage of SB 416 would finally mean that Oregon's adjunct faculty could count on equal pay for equal work—it is far past time to make this a reality!

Ensuring that our educators are equitably compensated and can meet their basic needs translates into additional time and energy that can go into making sure students get the attention and individualized learning they deserve. The fact that part-time faculty are able to serve students while making wages significantly below those of their full-time counterparts is nothing short of remarkable.

SB 416 is an important concept to help narrow the gap between our part-time and full-time faculty, as universities and community colleges continue to rely more and more on part-time faculty.

On behalf of our members, I'd like to thank Senator Dembrow for his work on this bill and share AFT-OR's strong support for SB 416.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jaime Rodriguez'.

Jaime Rodriguez
President
AFT-Oregon