

Submitter: Shane Wendell
On Behalf Of: University of Oregon
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Co-Chairs Steiner and Sanchez and members of the committee,

I write to you today as a parent of a future University of Oregon student who is concerned about this state's lack of investment, in higher education. When I heard that we rank 45th in the nation for per-student funding, it makes me wonder how Oregon's university students and their families continue to be able to afford a degree. The state can't keep squeezing us and think that we are going to just be able to keep sending our kids to college. We aren't going to have much of an educated workforce then.

I don't have a college degree because I have worked all my life in the trades and I want better for both my sons. My 18 year old is getting ready to decide where he is going to go after he gets his transfer degree from Linn Benton Community College in the fall. Yes, that's right, my son is going to be a 3rd year college student at the age of 19. He graduated high school at 16 and could have a bright future ahead of him. He wants to go to UO and we would love to be able to send him there but without some serious investments from the state, like funding for the Oregon Opportunity Grant and general funding dollars, I just don't know that it's going to happen.

Can you make my son and all the other deserving kids getting ready to head to University, a priority by investing in higher education? I know my family is counting on you and I am sure there are thousands of other Oregon families who don't want to have to tell their bright young child that they can't afford to send them to college.

Please invest in the future of Oregon with an additional \$200 million to the Oregon Opportunity Grant program and \$1.05 billion for Oregon's public universities.

Sincerely,

Shane Wendell
Brownsville, OR