

Submitter: John Stepanek

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Higher Education

Measure: SB273

I am submitting testimony in support of SB 273. I am a graduate student and employee at Oregon State University in Corvallis, and in my 5 years I have been extremely disappointed with the composition and leadership of the Board of Trustees at OSU. The board consists of corporate executives who have no background in research or education and are undemocratically appointed to lead one of the most important public institutions in the state. We need a more democratic process to fill the Board of Trustees, and we need more representation of people who actually work for the university: students, teachers, and researchers. OSU leadership continues to prioritize capital development projects and increase administrative salaries while graduate workers are living below the cost of living and being expected to work over 50 hours a week minimum. Class sizes are too big, and research labs are not being maintained while OSU spends \$50 million renovating a football stadium so that it has fewer seats. The priorities of the current Board of Trustees do not reflect the priorities of the OSU community because the current board members are not actually part of that community. We need democracy, representation, and accountability, and I hope that all the legislators who read this will vote in favor of SB 273. Thank you.