

SUBJECT: Please add HB 3089, the Hunger-Free Campuses bill, to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education Agenda

BODY:

Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain, and members of the committee:

My name is Jasmine Kaur, and I live in Salem, OR. I am writing in **support of HB 3089**, the Hunger-Free Campuses bill, which sends funding to colleges and universities to address student food insecurity on campuses. Colleges can use this funding to establish food pantries, create a "Swipe Out Hunger" program, create SNAP or other benefit enrollment opportunities, and more.

College students experience food insecurity at four times the rate of the general population, with student parents and BIPOC students experiencing food insecurity at five to six times higher. Prior to the pandemic, surveys found that 30% of students nationwide experienced food insecurity at some point during their time in college. For Oregon's community colleges specifically, 40% faced food insecurity, according to the Hope Center's #RealCollege Survey.

In 2021, the Oregon Legislature passed HB 2835, the Benefits Navigator bill, which placed a Benefits Navigator on each public college and university in Oregon. Benefits Navigators have been incredibly helpful in connecting students to resources over the past two years, but resources are limited from campus to campus.

HB 3089 will further support the work of the Benefits Navigators by allowing every institution to pinpoint the programs/solutions that work best for their student body to grow the impact of those targeted programs.

I work as the only Resources/Benefits Navigator under HB2835 at Chemeketa Community College helping to address student basic need insecurity. The local and community resources I refer to are inundated with others seeking help and oftentimes leave our students with no options for relief. This bill will provide much needed financial assistance to help address some of these concerns and establish more long-term solutions.

We know that when students have their basic needs met, they are more likely to graduate. Connecting students to benefits that address basic needs insecurity can increase skills training, college completion, and the attainment of credentials needed for careers that offer economic mobility.

A small investment in college students today pays major economic dividends tomorrow. The best way to build a more economically thriving state with self-sufficient communities is to enable students to earn their higher education degree. By funding campus hunger programs, more students will have the support they need to graduate and strengthen

the state's economic future.

Now is the time for Oregon to invest in our students of Higher Education. **Please add HB 3089, the Hunger-Free Campuses bill, to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education Agenda.**

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jasmine Kaur