

# FAIRSHOT FOR ALL

February 8, 2024

Chair Lively and Members of the House Committee on Higher Education,

The Fair Shot For All Coalition strongly supports HB 4162, the Student Emergency Needs package as part of our 2024 People's Budget.

College and university students in Oregon are reporting increased rates of food insecurity, housing instability, and challenges affording and accessing textbooks, transportation, childcare, and other basic needs. Among Oregon community college students, 63% of students identified as food insecure, housing insecure, or homeless.

In 2021, the Oregon State Legislature took a critical step in addressing student basic needs insecurities by passing HB 2835, the Benefits Navigator Bill. This legislation was designed to close opportunity gaps and facilitate economic mobility by increasing access to federal, state, and local benefits for low-income students at community colleges and public universities. 11,000+ students have been served by Basic Needs Oregon since 2022 and students have saved \$23 million on textbooks since 2015 created by Open Educational Resources.

Funding has not kept up with student demand. Funding basic needs and affordable textbooks is an essential component of a comprehensive statewide affordability strategy for college students. The 2024 Student Emergency Needs Package is a bipartisan, student-centered effort to support Oregon's Basic Needs Navigators and Textbook Affordability Program with \$6 million dollars in one-time, emergency funding.

This policy will further support the legislature's work of addressing students' basic needs and textbook affordability by allowing every institution to pinpoint the programs/solutions that work best for their student body to better access housing, food, clothing, technology, textbooks, transportation, and other student needs.

We urge your support on HB 4162.

# FAIRSHOT FOR ALL

**Fair Shot for All** is an economic justice coalition of grassroots organizations and labor unions across the state who work together to create opportunities for all working families to thrive, build power with our communities, and dismantle historic and systemic economic inequities in our state. We are organized across race, class, and gender and center those of us who have been impacted most: Oregonians who are Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and/or people of color; LGBTQ+; women; and/or working class families. There is incredible strength in our numbers and our fierce belief in the future we are fighting for.

## OUR STEERING COMMITTEE



OREGON  
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