



February 6, 2025

Esteemed Chair Hudson, Vice Chairs Fragala and Harbick, and Members of the Committee,

I write with unwavering support of HB 2669 and urge its passage with full funding.

I serve as President of Lane Community College Education Association, representing the 475 full-time and part-time faculty at LCC, and as Vice President of the OEA Community College Council, representing more than 4000 academic workers at Oregon community colleges, including part-time faculty. I am a full-time faculty member, and I currently teach writing at LCC.

Like full-time faculty, my part-time faculty colleagues are leaders in their disciplines and have the **same qualifications**, including advanced degrees in their fields. Part-time faculty teach the **same classes** to the **same students** at Oregon community colleges, yet have substandard salaries at much lower rates.

The Equal Pay Act is the law of the land in this great state of Oregon. However, shouldn't part-time faculty who teach the majority of courses at our community colleges also benefit?

It is time to address this inequity.

The majority of faculty at Oregon community colleges are part-time, contingent workers with term-by-term employment. Part-time faculty face precarity with no job security and are, in effect, part of what higher education researchers have termed the "Gig Academy."<sup>1</sup> Low salary rates leave some part-time faculty commuting from college to college to try to make ends meet. And this impacts full-time faculty workloads as we strive to hire and orient new part-time faculty coming and going from our institutions regularly, not to mention the burden on HR departments with changing assignments and staffing every three months.

The facts are stark. According to our most recent all faculty survey at LCC, among part-faculty who are not retired:

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<sup>1</sup> Kezar, Adrianna, et al. *The Gig Academy: Mapping Labor in the Neoliberal University (Reforming Higher Education: Innovation and the Public Good)*. Illustrated, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2019.

- 37% have at **least two jobs**;
- 19% have at **least three jobs**;
- 39.5% report having **relied on government assistance while working as faculty** at LCC;
- 15% report experiencing **food insecurity**; and
- 15.2% had experienced **housing insecurity** in the year of the survey.

The statewide landscape is similar. The statewide average for part-time faculty is salary rates on separate lower salary schedules at **only 58% of full-time salary rates**. This means that if a full-time faculty member earns \$100,000 per year to teach a full load of courses, a part-time faculty member would earn only \$58,000 to teach the same full load of courses, and if the part-time faculty member were teaching half the load of the same courses, they would only earn \$29,000. In fact, a recent review of 2024 part-time faculty salaries by the OEA indicates that part-time faculty working half-time earn average salaries of less than **\$24,000 per year**. This annual **salary amount falls below the threshold for SNAP eligibility** for a single person. These are **poverty wages** necessitating government assistance, for the very faculty upon whom our institutions rely.

While community colleges promote economic mobility and social justice for our diverse student population, the system is inherently unjust – built upon the exploitation of part-time workers, who struggle to get by. This is a disservice to our students and the communities we serve.

Please pass HB 2669 with full funding.

Thank you for your consideration and for your leadership in addressing this pressing issue.

*Adrienne Mitchell*

Adrienne Mitchell, M.A., M.Ed.

Vice President, Oregon Education Association Community College Council

*representing 4,000+ part- and full-time faculty and staff from 19 community college unions*

President, Lane Community College Education Association,

*representing the 275 part-time and 200 full-time faculty of LCC*