

Chair Hudson, Vice Chairs Fragala, Harbick and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is David Rogow and I am urging your support for HB 2669. I started taking classes at LCC over 25 years ago. which eventually led me to earning a PhD in chemistry, and pursuing a career in teaching. I'm very proud to be teaching at Lane Community College, where I can give back to the community college that nurtured me. I have been a part-time faculty, teaching at LCC for over five years now, during which time I have been teaching part-time at Linn-Benton Community College as well. I also taught at Chemeketa Community College for over two years during that same time, and also worked at the U of O and WOU. As you can probably imagine, two part time jobs add up to more than one full-time job worth of work. Despite being spread so thin, I do my very best to make sure that my students are getting as much of my energy as I have to give, and that doesn't leave as much as I, or my partner would like for my life outside of work.

One of the reasons that I have to teach at multiple colleges, aside from needing to make enough money to live, is because I'm working toward having my student loans forgiven under the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program. Part of the stipulations to qualify for forgiveness under the PSLF program is that one must work an average of 30 hours or more per week, each year, for 10 years or 120 payments, and the 30+ hours can include multiple public service jobs if they're part-time. Without the PSLF program, there would be no possible way for me to pay off my student loans on my current salaries with the accrual of interest. So, I'll need to work at multiple colleges for the ten year period, or find a full-time position. I assume most here understand how competitive full-time faculty positions are these days, that combined with the fact that I want to live in this area where those open positions don't come up very often, means that I will likely be working at multiple colleges for the foreseeable future.

My partner and I have been trying to save money to buy a house for many years now, and with the recent inflation and increase in interest rates, we feel like we are priced out of the market, especially with student loan payments on top of everything else. Equal pay for part-time faculty would make it possible for me to save more money for a down payment on a house, which would help us start building some equity in real estate rather than watching all of that hard-earned money disappear to rent every month. With the recently inflated prices of everything, including food, and fuel required to travel to my other teaching job, it feels like teaching part-time is a low wage job, which is not consistent with the well-respected position that I see it as.

A part-time instructor should receive the same compensation for teaching a class that a full-time instructor receives, in proportion to the amount of teaching. Teaching faculty are directly responsible for the main purpose of the college, which is to educate students. We accomplish this, support students, create a sense of student belonging, and attempt to increase student retention. Without part-time faculty, the college would not be able to accomplish its mission, so why aren't we treated with equal respect, at the very least in the form of fair compensation? I urge you to vote Yes on HB 2669.