

Greetings, Chair Frederick, Vice Chair Weber, and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Kai J. White, and I am a member of the Associated Students of Portland Community College.

I am writing in strong support of Senate Bill 478, with the -1 amendment. This bill includes several positive steps forward, but one provision, in particular, stands out as a crucial improvement for our community colleges.

Providing a modest but meaningful stipend will help ensure that our Student Trustee—and other board members in need—can cover real expenses, reducing financial barriers to participation.

The requirement for a widely available contact email will reinforce our colleges' role as public institutions, increasing accessibility and transparency. I hope this is just the beginning of a broader commitment to open communication.

Most importantly, granting our Student Trustee the ability to cast a real vote—rather than a symbolic advisory vote—will give students the representation they deserve. Students are among the largest stakeholders in our institutions, yet their voices are often overlooked. A real vote would empower our Student Trustee to advocate meaningfully for student interests, strengthening both student well-being and the integrity of the college itself.

I urge your support of SB 478 with the -1 amendment.

Thank you for your time and consideration.