

Student Testimony SB 478

Good morning, Senator Sollman, and distinguished members of the committee.

My name is Travis Overvig, and I serve as President of the Student Leadership Council (SLC) at Linn-Benton Community College in Albany. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you today about our governance model, which successfully integrates student representation within our existing board structure.

At Linn-Benton, the SLC operates with significant autonomy. While the college collects student fees, we retain full control over these funds, ensuring that financial decisions directly benefit student programs and services. This independence enhances accountability and allows us to address student needs efficiently and effectively.

As President, I actively participate in Board of Education meetings, delivering detailed reports on SLC initiatives and emerging student concerns. This direct engagement ensures student perspectives shape key decisions that impact their education and campus experience. Beyond board meetings, we maintain ongoing dialogue with administration, strengthening our role in institutional planning.

Our governance structure is further reinforced by a robust Memorandum of Understanding with the college, which fosters transparency and establishes clear expectations. A key component is our monthly strategic meeting with the college president, where we discuss student perspectives, council achievements, and collaborative initiatives. This direct line of communication ensures student input is not only acknowledged but also actively incorporated into broader decision-making.

The Linn-Benton model demonstrates that strong student representation can be achieved through meaningful engagement and structured collaboration rather than structural board changes. By fostering clear communication and direct involvement, we ensure student voices are not just heard but have real influence in shaping the college's future.

I urge the committee to consider Linn-Benton's approach as a proven and sustainable model for student governance within existing frameworks. I strongly believe that student voices should be amplified in institutional decision-making, and the Linn-Benton model demonstrates an effective way to achieve this—ensuring students have a meaningful seat at the table without disrupting established governance structures.

Thank you for your time and consideration.