



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Chair Hudson, Vice Chairs Fragala and Harbick,

I am submitting testimony in **support of HB 3182 and HB 3183**. I firmly believe the Student Basic Needs and Workforce Stabilization Act is a vital investment for the success and future of Oregon's students. Improving our education system has long since been a priority of mine. I got my start in politics lobbying for the Oregon Student Association in the 1990s. As you all know, when we support our youth and young adults we see tremendous results. The big picture is right in front of us: an investment into our students is a direct investment into Oregon.

Let's face it, college is expensive - between tuition, class fees, textbooks, loans and interest, student housing, meal plans, transportation, and everyday expenses, our students are graduating with crippling amounts of debt. It comes as no surprise that students are struggling to stay afloat when facing barriers to having their basic needs met. We should all be concerned about the burden these great many obstacles place on students. My goal is that Oregon's college students should be focused on their academic success, and not how they are going to survive college without breaking the bank.

These bills in front of us, HB 3182 and HB 3183, are exactly the kind of action we need to take. With a little over \$22 million in targeted funding that will go directly to supporting basic needs, affordable housing, and textbook affordability, we have the chance to make a tangible difference for thousands of Oregon students.

With just \$10 million, our state can choose to prevent students from starving. We can house students. We can provide childcare. We can even give them a lift to class. Ensuring students' access to basic needs allows them to focus on what should be preoccupying their time: school and studying

Let's not forget to discuss how housing, the biggest issue facing every Oregonian, is uniquely impacting college students. Without stable housing, their academic progress, general safety, and well being are jeopardized on a daily basis. But we can combat this by establishing the Student Housing Task Force to investigate and advocate for student success in the form of affordable housing in the long term, while shoring up the immediate need for a critical investment in student housing with \$6.5 million allocation to organizations dedicated to providing low-cost housing for students.

It's truly devastating to know that students sometimes have to choose between purchasing essential textbooks or covering their basic living expenses, and in some cases, even having to weigh the option of dropping classes due to the overwhelming cost. The additional \$5.2 million in funding for Open Oregon Educational Resources proposed by this Act would be instrumental in expanding to serve more students who could benefit from reduced or free class materials.

I strongly urge you all to help pass the Student Basic Needs and Workforce Stabilization Act. Here is our chance to make sure that students don't aren't further burdened by the constraints of rising education and living costs. By addressing food and housing insecurity and ensuring students have access to affordable class materials, we can help them achieve their academic / career / life goals, while reducing dropout rates, and actively working to foster more inclusive and equitable learning environments for students across the state.

It's time to put our students first and make them the heart of our decision making! Please join in voting yes on HB 3182 and HB 3183, and thanks for reading this.

Sincerely,



Rob Nosse
State Representative

