

Submitter: Anthony Benedetti White
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB604

Dear Oregon State Legislators,

As representatives of our state, I urge you to prioritize funding and support for higher education in Oregon with Senate Bill 604. The pandemic has significantly impacted students' educational experiences, and now more than ever, it is essential to ensure that our higher education system has the necessary resources to support students in their academic and personal development.

We recommend funding for programs such as Strong Start, which provides assistance to students entering into universities across the state. This financial support can make a significant difference in enabling students to create a strong foundation for their journey into higher education.

Being involved in this program has allowed me to understand and observe the benefit from having a smooth transition into college life by developing strategies and techniques that help them be successful in college and transfers to their careers.

Furthermore, as we emerge from the pandemic, it is crucial to recognize the unique challenges that students have faced over the past few years. Many students experienced learning disruptions during remote learning, dealt with mental health issues related to isolation, and experienced disruptions in their personal and family lives that often led to financial distress.

Therefore, we urge you to consider increasing funding for programs that provide mental health support and other resources to help students recover from the pandemic's effects.

One program that has been particularly successful in setting students up for success is the Destination Western program at Western Oregon University, funded by the Strong Start funding. This program provides students with the resources and support they need to thrive academically and personally. Funding Strong Start with Senate Bill 604 ensures no matter which Oregon Public University a student attends, we can create a foundation for students to build upon and succeed.

In conclusion, I urge you to prioritize funding and support for higher education in Oregon. By doing so, we can ensure that our students have access to the resources and opportunities they need to succeed, both in their academic and personal lives. Thank you for your consideration and dedication to our state's future.

Sincerely,
Anthony Benedetti White