

Submitter: Mark Van Steeter

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce
Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3213

Dear Chair Hudson, Vice Chair Fragaia, Vice Chair Harbick and members of the House Higher Education Committee,

My name is Mark Van Steeter, a faculty member at Western Oregon University. I strongly support HB 3213.

I have met with members of the WOU Foundation several times over the past decade.

What initiated my action was concern from students. They wanted to know what corporations the university supported through the investments of the foundation. My requests were rejected by the president of the WOU foundation, their financial advisor and the president of the university.

Students met with the chair of the foundation and were sternly informed that the WOU Foundation was not a public entity and they had no obligation to share any details of their investment actions. Both I and the students were dismayed by the complete lack of transparency and forceful defiance by the WOU Foundation.

Please support HB 3213 so that Oregon's open government and public records standards apply to public university foundations.

Our students deserve to know.

Sincerely,

Mark Van Steeter, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Department of Sustainability
Western Oregon University