

**Date:** February 25th, 2025

**To:** House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development

**From:** Nick Keough, Political and Legislative Organizer, AFT-Oregon

**Re:** Support for HB 3213: Public University Foundation Sunshine Act

Chair Hudson, Vice Chairs Fragala and Harbirck, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Dylan Perfect, and I am a student at Oregon State University and the Organizing Committee Chair for the OSU Student Workers' Union campaign. I formerly worked as a full-time staffer under the OSU Foundation. I am here today to speak in support of HB 3213 because all students, faculty, and staff and the public deserve access to clear information about what's going on within public university foundations in Oregon.

Many student workers balance jobs alongside their studies to help cover tuition, housing, and other basic needs. As students, we care deeply about the success of our universities, and we want to ensure that resources are being used to support affordability, strong academic programs, and fair compensation for workers. However, it can be difficult to fully understand university finances when foundation spending isn't clearly reported.

At OSU, we benefit from some of the more transparent financial reporting among Oregon's public universities. Unfortunately, this is not the case at every university in Oregon. HB 3213 would ensure that all public university foundations in the state meet at least a basic standard of transparency. By bringing all universities up to this standard, we can build greater trust in how resources are managed and ensure that students and workers are fully informed about the financial health of their institutions. And it would improve transparency at OSU, too.

Plainly, when what does and doesn't get funded at our public institutions is decided by private donors, it doesn't negate our appreciation for these gifts to acknowledge that they are also a legacy one leaves behind, and thus a form of influence. Just as the public ought to know the financial influences upon their public officials, they ought to know the financial influences upon their public institutions. We have heard at today's hearing about the rights of secrecy for donors, but I would like to also bring the committee's attention to the rights of the students and the people of the State of Oregon. Despite all of this, to be clear, anonymous donations are not prohibited by this legislation.

Oregon's public universities rely on state resources, public branding, and student tuition dollars while working closely with their foundations. Public access to financial practices is essential to ensuring our universities' priorities reflect the needs of students and the public.

I urge your support for HB 3213. Thank you for your time.