

Chair Huson, Vice Chair Fragala, Vice Chair Harbick, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Robb Friedlander, and I am the Director of Advocacy at Swipe Out Hunger, a national organization dedicated to addressing food insecurity among college students. I am writing to express my strong support for HB 3182 and HB 3183: The Student Basic Needs and Workforce Stabilization Act.

College and university students in Oregon are facing growing challenges in meeting their basic needs. Increasing rates of food insecurity, housing instability, and the rising costs of textbooks, transportation, and childcare create barriers that threaten student success and workforce readiness. HB 3182 and HB 3183 represent a bipartisan, student-centered effort to provide targeted support in these areas, ensuring that students have the resources they need to thrive.

The Student Basic Needs and Workforce Stabilization Act will allocate a total of approximately \$22 million to address these urgent issues through three key initiatives:

Student Basic Needs Programming: The bill will establish a grant program providing \$10 million in funding to Oregon's public universities and community colleges. These funds will be used to strengthen and expand basic needs programs, allowing each institution the flexibility to tailor support services to the unique needs of their student population.

Affordable Student Housing: The legislation designates \$6.5 million for non-profit organizations focused on providing low-cost housing for post-secondary students. This includes \$4 million in continued funding for College Housing NW and an additional \$2.5 million for other non-profits or institutions to expand rental assistance programs and potentially offset capital costs associated with affordable student housing development.

Textbook Affordability and Open Educational Resources: Open Oregon Educational Resources, the state's leading initiative for textbook affordability, plays a crucial role in reducing financial barriers for students. The act would establish a grant program providing \$4.5 million in funding for Open Oregon Educational Resources for the 2025-27 biennium. This investment will support the widespread adoption of open, low-cost, high-quality instructional materials that reduce the burden of textbook costs for students.

Investing in these programs is essential for student success and workforce development. By addressing basic needs insecurity, expanding affordable housing options, and reducing the cost of educational materials, HB 3182 and HB 3183 will help ensure that Oregon's students can focus on their education and achieve their full potential.

I urge the committee to support and advance these important bills. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Robb Friedlander
Director of Advocacy Swipe Out Hunger