

COURTNEY NERON
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 26



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Testimony in Support of [HB 3182](#) & [HB 3183](#)

February 10, 2025

Chair Hudson, Vice Chair Fragala, Vice Chair Harbick, and Members of the House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development,

I write to you today in support of HB 3182 and HB 3183, two bills that will make important investments in student **basic needs initiatives**.

With these bills we have the opportunity to distribute grants to public universities and community colleges for basic needs programming. Basic needs programming includes “services and supports provided to students for assistance in meeting certain basic needs, including **food, housing, transportation, textbooks** or other related needs.” **The Task Force on Student Housing** established in this bill will help support housing for rent-burdened students in higher education in Oregon and the Open Oregon Educational Resources funding will also remove barriers to learning.

HB3182 and HB3183 recognize the interconnected nature of lack of affordability of higher education opportunities, rising housing costs, food insecurity, and the cost of textbooks. These bills direct \$10 million to fund the grant program for basic needs programming and \$4.5 million to Open Oregon Educational Resources to reduce financial burdens for students. Since its inception, **Open Oregon Educational Resources has saved students collectively \$24 million**, that they were then able to use to afford food, health care, transportation and rent. By supporting the continued development of low-cost, high-quality solutions, this bill ensures that students can focus on their studies with access to the home, nutrition, and texts they need.

In 2021, as Vice Chair of the Education Committee, I sponsored and advocated for the [HB2835](#) to fund our **basic needs navigators** with the goals of:

- 1) **leveraging state dollars** to obtain more federal funding,
- 2) **addressing growing financial insecurity** at the intersection of tuition increases and inadequate financial aid programs, and
- 3) **supporting Oregon children of college students**, as so many of our most motivated students are parents working to achieve economic stability for their families.

Housing insecurity is a significant barrier to student academic success and completion. It negatively impacts academic performance, mental health, and retention rates. Without basic needs met, such as stable housing, students are at greater risk of dropping out or extending their education due to financial burdens. This bill’s focus is on providing resources to stabilize students, breaking down barriers, and ensuring all students have the opportunity to succeed.

I urge your support for HB 3182 and 3183 to deliver positive outcomes for students and their families.

Sincerely,

Representative Courtney Neron | House District 26: King City, Sherwood, Tigard, and Wilsonville
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