

Greetings, Chair Frederick, Vice Chair Weber, and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Kai J. White, I am a member of the Associated Students of Portland Community College and am speaking on their behalf. I am also a member of the Open Education Resource Steering Committee for Portland Community College.

The textbook affordability crisis is absolutely critical to address. This is one of the few issues that can be quickly and effectively addressed by you and other legislators. This is not a partisan issue. I myself have been burdened by the cost of textbooks and I am not alone in this. As I mentioned in our information session, the textbook industry itself is predatory. Recently I conducted a survey for ASPCC at Portland Community College that reached 384 students to get a sense for how they feel about this situation.

- 88.8% agreed with the statement, “the textbook industry places a significant financial burden on students”.
- 7.8% had a neutral stance.
- 3.4% disagree that the textbook industry places a significant financial burden on students.

The students are struggling. They are being taken advantage of and they are tired. Another recent set of canvassing questions of anonymous students has represented the same situation. I will be quoting our students' responses directly.

- “Textbooks are overpriced + they constantly come out with new editions required by courses.”
- “Sometimes, students only use the textbook once or twice a year, and pay a lot for it.”
- “\$2-300 for a textbook, in many cases, is price gouging + Insignificant edits made to justify a new edition of the book.”

- “I had to pay \$200 for a textbook I lost access to after one term.”
- “Textbooks make up like 10% of tuition, it's ridiculous.”
- “Already having to pay for college/ classes and then having to pay for materials as well is expensive.”

These are just a few of the responses, with many more simply stating textbooks are “too expensive”.

The students have resoundingly made this point throughout their responses. All other forms of measurement indicated this same pattern. This is not just a frustration, this is a crisis, our institutions have failed to protect us from corporate greed and their use, as accurately stated by one of the students at PCC, of “price gouging”.

Investing in Open Education Resources would begin to curb the predatory impacts of the textbook industry on our vulnerable students. Every single student in this recent survey has said that not only would OER be a good alternative to the traditional textbook model, but those that have experience with it would use it again. Every single one. Not only that, it is also a way to contribute to the vast and free pool of human knowledge that exists. These benefits will be felt forever, if we choose to move forward today.

Additionally, the return on investment for the students is incredible, for every 1\$ we spend, it is estimated our students save 11\$. Investing 4,500,000\$ leads to approximately 50,000,000\$ of savings for our students. This is an absolutely phenomenal investment that will have both short and long term benefits on students and our economy. Instead of the textbook industry siphoning money from our students and into the publishers pockets; the grants provided by this bill will empower both students and teachers.

I heavily urge your support of HB 3183. Please help us make this change, our education is not about profit.

Thank you for your time and consideration.