

Submitter: Devon Lawson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce  
Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3025

My name is Devon Lawson, and I am a student at Lane Community College. I am here today to voice my strong support for HB 3025, which will provide direct grants to students to assist with the cost of higher education. This bill represents a necessary and transformative step toward making college more accessible and equitable for students like me and many of my peers.

As a community college student, I see firsthand how financial barriers impact my classmates. Many of us work full-time or multiple part-time jobs just to afford tuition, rent, and basic necessities. Some are parents, some are first-generation college students, and many come from backgrounds where higher education has never been a realistic option due to financial constraints. The shared responsibility model, which this bill would eliminate, has often placed an undue burden on students and families who are already struggling to make ends meet. It assumes that every family can contribute financially, but in reality, many students receive little to no support from their families, making higher education an uphill battle.

By awarding grants directly to students, this bill will help alleviate some of the financial stress that prevents students from focusing on their education. It will allow students to dedicate more time to their studies instead of working excessive hours just to stay enrolled. It will help close the opportunity gap for low-income and marginalized students who are disproportionately burdened by student debt. This bill is not just about financial aid—it is about economic mobility, workforce development, and ensuring that education remains a pathway to opportunity rather than a privilege reserved for those who can afford it.

Community colleges play a crucial role in our state's economy, providing affordable education and career pathways for thousands of students each year. Investing in students through direct grants will strengthen our workforce and ensure that Oregon remains competitive in a rapidly changing economy. Students who receive financial assistance are more likely to complete their degrees, obtain stable employment, and contribute positively to their communities.

I urge you to pass this bill and take a meaningful step toward making education a right, not a privilege. No student should have to choose between paying rent and pursuing their dreams. By investing in students today, we are investing in a stronger, more equitable future for all Oregonians.

Thank you for your time, and I appreciate your consideration of this important bill.