

Co-Chair Lieber, Co-Chair Sanchez and members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means,

My name is Adam Wickert. I am the Scholarship and Student Success Analyst at Clackamas Community College. I am here today to speak in support of HB 3182 and HB 3183, the Student Basic Needs and Workforce Stabilization Act. I'm honored to be here with my son, Daniel.

While I work hard to support student needs through scholarships, the reality is that many of our students have much more immediate needs that cannot be addressed by them. Basic needs support are essential to the needs of so many community college students. Our benefits navigators do a wonderful job of managing within their limited resources, but they need more from the state, not less.

Just this past year, CCC's Benefits Navigator, Helen Paz, saw an increase in her number of students served from 196 in 2023 to 371 in 2024. The demand is not getting any lighter. Helen, like the rest of the benefits navigators across the state, understand how to leverage dollars from multiple sources and use them in ways that lead to good outcomes. In 2024, the Foundation supported 169 students with just over \$93000 in basic needs support. Let me put that in context-we operate as a last ditch funding mechanism. We only come into play when all other resources have been exhausted. Without the work of Helen, our most vulnerable students would not be able to even consider going to college, let alone persevering to the point that they can achieve a degree.

By supporting this Act, you are offering more than just financial help; you are showing students in our state that at the end of the day, Oregon will have their back. In these challenging times, that investment will pay off more than you will ever know. These are our future nurses, educators, and creature protectors (Daniel's chosen profession). Thank you for your time. I believe in you and I trust that my words will be thoughtfully considered by your committee.

Thank you!
Adam Wickert