

Submitter: Denaee' Towner

On Behalf Of: The Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians

Committee: House Committee on Higher Education

Re: Testimony in support of Senate Bill 5525

Dear Chair Lively, Vice Chair Ruiz, and members of the committee.

My name is Denaee' Towner. I am a member of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians, a George Fox University Alumni, and future grad school student. I am writing on behalf of both my tribe and tribal students of Oregon.

The Oregon Tribal Student Grant made it possible for me to obtain my bachelor's degree at George Fox University while caring for both my home and my family. Being a working mother is hard enough. Being a working mother with a mortgage to pay, and coursework deadlines to meet is even harder. The grant provided me with an incentive that allowed me to keep going when I so badly wanted to give up.

It was because of the Oregon Tribal Student Grant that I was able to persevere through academic pressures and receive a degree that I can use both personally and professionally for a lifetime. It was because of the Oregon Tribal Student Grant that I became a first-generation college graduate. It was because of the Oregon Tribal Student Grant that I was able to pay my household bills, and purchase materials needed to be successful in school. And it was because of the Oregon Tribal Student Grant that I was able to model such accomplishments that made my daughters proud.

Thank you for your time and consideration. My sincere hope is that with your support of SB 5525 I will be able to access this grant once again to enter graduate school and obtain my master's degree in social work.

Thank you to both the Siletz Tribe and those working to spearhead this life-changing grant to help lay the foundation for lifelong success for many.

Respectfully,

Denaee' Towner

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