

Submitter: Bryson Petterborg  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee  
On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5525

Chairs Sollman & Ruiz, members of the committee,

My name is Bryson Petterborg, I'm a University of Oregon student, and I'm writing in support of including HB 3182 and HB 3183, the student basic needs package, in the HECC budget.

The University of Oregon estimates that I should be paying \$1,400 in textbooks this year. Between the cost of housing, food, and tuition, textbooks just don't fit into my budget.

Instead, I spend hours scouring for free and low-cost alternatives. I can never get the correct edition, and trade time on homework for time figuring out what's different between my version and the textbook actually used for the course.

If I can't find an affordable version of a textbook, I just go without. I compile whatever resources I can find online for free. The materials I use end up being lower quality, and less related to the course, leading my learning to suffer.

Nowadays, before registering for classes I check to see if they're using Open Educational Resources. OER provides grants to faculty to write textbooks that are accessible for free or at significantly reduced costs.

In addition to OER's typically being free, they read better than traditional textbooks. Authors of OERs write with students and quality education in mind, in addition to being uniquely relevant to Oregon.

Since need-based financial aid like the Oregon Opportunity Grant and Pell grant don't apply to textbooks, the costs are especially challenging for low-income students to meet. Everyone I know who's dropped out of college has dropped out because the cost of living and textbooks were too much to keep up with. Access to OERs removes the most unpredictable cost students experience in addition to saving students thousands of dollars a year.

I strongly urge your support for both HB 3182 and HB 3183 to address affordability by bolstering existing supports like OER and programmatic budgets for benefits navigators.

