

Submitter: Emily Dunn

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2586

Dear Members of the Senate Committee on Education,

I am writing in support of HB 2586, which would allow asylum seekers to receive an exemption from nonresident tuition and fees at Oregon's public universities and at Oregon Health and Science University.

As someone who works directly with students at Oregon State University (OSU), I have witnessed first-hand the challenges faced by asylum-seeking students. One of my current students is in the United States under asylum status. They were brought to the U.S. as a minor by their father as his job transferred him here, and they completed high school here in Oregon. Unfortunately, due to dangerous conditions in their country of origin, it is now critically unsafe for them to return.

At this moment, this student is pursuing an advanced degree at OSU. However, the burden of nonresident tuition and fees is overwhelming, especially given their lack of family support since their father is no longer supporting them and their mother has very limited English skills. Despite these challenges, they remain in good academic standing, are highly engaged in our program, are continuously seeking scholarships, and are legally employed to support themselves.

It would be deeply unjust for this student to be forced to leave their academic program simply because of financial barriers. They have lived in Oregon since high school and did not come here by choice. They deserve to be treated equitably—just like any other student who was moved to Oregon by their parents and completed high school in here.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind regards,
Emily Dunn
Corvallis, Oregon