

March 28, 2017

Chair Roblan and Members of the Senate Committee on Education,

My name is Christine Saunders and I am a resident of Portland, Oregon. I am writing to ask you to vote yes on SB 196, because taking care of educators impacts the success of their students.

I am a recent graduate from a Masters in Social Work program where the majority of my courses were taught by adjunct faculty. One instructor of mine taught at least four classes each quarter at both of the local higher education institutions, more than any of the tenured faculty, yet could not afford health insurance. When she broke her wrist and needed to seek care the only option she had for health care was the emergency room. She spent an entire day waiting to be seen by a doctor. This meant that she had to cancel class for over fifty students to receive necessary medical care.

As a social work student, I found it appalling that this instructor who was such a crucial part of my education and had taught me a professional code of ethics, was not provided access to this benefit. Instead, it was my educational experience which was hindered.

SB 196 require public institutions of higher education to use the aggregate total of hours worked by a faculty member working at multiple institutions when determining whether they are eligible for health care benefits. It is essential that educators must have the tools and resources they need to provide the best possible education for their students. That includes access to affordable health insurance.

I urge you to vote yes on SB 196.

Sincerely,

Christine Saunders, MSW