

Laura Salerno Testimony: SB 5524 for April 10th Public Hearing

I am the academic advisor for Oregon Promise students at Rogue Community College in Medford. I have helped 331 students this academic year who have used this award to help pay tuition for their first year in college. They are a very motivated group of mostly full time students who are focused on keeping up their GPA's and enrolling every term to keep this vital funding. I have conversations multiple times a week with students and parents who are concerned about this program being cut next year. Many have told me that getting this award made the difference when deciding if, where, and when they should go to college. At a time when tuition is going up every year and many of our students delay college to work at minimum wage jobs, Oregon Promise has been a great motivation and financial boost that has enabled them to prioritize their education. I have heard countless stories of students learning about the 2.5 high school GPA requirement and working hard their senior year to increase their GPA to be eligible for the program. I'm heartened by their commitment, and I urge you to vote in favor of SB 5524 in order to assure Oregon Promise's continued funding for 2017-2019. Thank you.