

Amber Friedman. Citizen of Lane County, and a recent graduate of the University of Oregon.

Brooke Freed. Currently employed by the University of Oregon but presenting only in my capacity as a citizen of Lane County, and as a recent graduate of the University of Oregon.

Chair Doherty and Members of the Committee:

During our graduate studies we had the opportunity to partner with the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to evaluate the effectiveness of Oregon's Open Educational Resources designation requirement.

As graduate students we were interested in this research because we knew first hand that the high cost of textbooks is a significant financial burden on students.

Through our research we surveyed 22 public universities and community colleges in Oregon and received responses from approximately ten thousand students. We also conducted group interviews at Portland Community College and Oregon State University.

We found that nearly 60% of college students have been affected academically or made a decision about a course due to the cost of textbooks. This included dropping a course, enrolling in fewer

courses, and earning a poor grade or failing a course because they could not afford to purchase the required textbooks.

Our research also demonstrated that current OER efforts are not doing enough. Over 84% of community college students and 94% of university students did NOT know how to find OER at their institution.

Over 60% of the students we surveyed wanted to see a symbol or designation for OER or low-cost textbooks on the online course schedule, and a large number of students also wanted to see these listings on the course description, on the bookstore listing, and in the student registration portal – basically EVERYWHERE the course was listed.

Our research also found that timely posting of the required course materials was important to students. Students shared that instructors frequently do not post their course materials list prior to registration deadlines, making it difficult for students to know how much the materials are expected to cost. Based on our research we recommend that this information be posted earlier, in time to impact student registration decisions.

Section 2 of the proposed House Bill 2213 would help to ensure that students are informed about the cost of required textbooks at the time of course registration, and we believe that this is a positive step.

We also highly endorse Section 3 (subsection 1c) of the proposed bill, which would help to improve student awareness regarding low-cost and no-cost course materials across all community colleges and public universities in Oregon.

However, given the limited funding available to these public institutions, we do not believe that they should have the burden of mitigating the economic impact of OERs on bookstore revenue. We do not endorse Section 3 (subsection 1b) of the proposed bill. We believe that these public institutions have a much greater obligation to use their time and resources to increase OER awareness and adoption, to lower the financial burden for students.

We also believe that the OER program will continue to be important in helping to lower the cost of education for students in Oregon and we strongly recommend continued funding for this program.

Thank you for your time. Feel free to contact us if you have any further questions.

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