

Dear Editor:

Since my freshman year of high school, I have aspired to go to college in Oregon. When the time came I was happy to learn about various programs and opportunities that would make my decision to go to school outside of my own state more financially feasible. I have been given the opportunity to pay less for my education in Oregon.

While I am incredibly grateful to know this, I am also extremely concerned by a recent realization of mine. Paying in-state tuition in Oregon is a fairly simple thing for me, a girl who lived in *Colorado* for the past 18 years, to do. However, numerous aspiring students who may have lived in Oregon for their *entire* lives are not given the option or opportunity to pay in-state prices for their postsecondary education in this state.

The students I am talking about are those who either are not technically residents of Oregon (because they are undocumented citizens) or those who may have been born and raised in the state (documented residents of Oregon) but can't pay in-state tuition rates because of their *parents'* residency status. While the state of Oregon invests in these students throughout the K-12 system, they are left out in the cold once college rolls around. Some of Oregon's brightest and most promising minds are being denied their state's support, and, consequently, the opportunity to pursue an affordable postsecondary education. This is quite a shame, considering the fact that the education they could receive (if only they had the opportunity to pay in-state tuition) would eventually help them to pay more taxes, become more civically engaged, and contribute more to the community, thus making Oregon stronger.

Fortunately, a recently introduced piece of legislation has begun to address the problem I have outlined above. Tuition Equity is that piece of legislation, and, if passed, will offer Oregon's undocumented students the opportunity to pay in-state tuition rates as long as they spend three years at and graduate from an Oregon high school, apply for and get accepted by an Oregon university, and show that they are working towards residency. This bill can help students now, and it can help Oregon in the years that those students use their education to give back to their community. Support Tuition Equity, and reinvest in Oregon's future.

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