

Tyler Williams
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Testimony in support of HB 6117

Dear Members of the Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. My name is Tyler Williams and I am a student at the University of Connecticut. I am writing to support HB 6117: An Act Concerning the Use of Open-Source Textbooks in Higher Education.

The cost of higher education is a huge flashpoint in politics today, and the state's fiscal situation and proposed budget cuts drive the point home even further. College is hard for most students to afford, and the cost seems to keep rising. One aspect that I think goes underappreciated is the cost of textbooks. I have switched my major twice, and bought textbooks for coursework in Engineering, Women's Studies, and History majors. In every program, I found that the books were egregiously expensive and often went unused in class. What's more, since each class is different and each semester the same class changes books, it is almost impossible to budget for textbook costs when saving for college. I work to put myself through school, and depend on loans to cover the rest. While I can make informed decisions about housing and tuition due to the up-front nature of finding information on them, it is often impossible for me to know how much I will end up paying for books, even a few weeks before the semester. I'm graduating in May and had saved up money to put down on my first apartment after school. But once I got to class, I was inundated with the need for more books, and I lost all my savings. Now I don't know how or where I will be living after school.

If the University of Connecticut made open source textbooks an available resource for me, I would be more confident in my living situation post-graduation, and I could have saved close to \$5,000 over the course of my college education, which would make a significant dent in paying back my student loans.

So, I urge all members of this committee to support HB 6117. Once again, thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony.

Sincerely,
Tyler Williams