

Good morning, Chairman Argall, Chairwoman Williams and members of the Senate Education Committee.

My name is Catharine Repkoe, and I am here to share my perspective as a senior in high school about to embark on the next phase of my education, and my life.

My mom is an elementary school music teacher, my aunt a retired English teacher, and my grandmother is a retired elementary school teacher. Teaching is in my blood.

While I'm soaking up these moments with friends at school in our final year, I am excited to begin my freshman year at Millersville University in the fall.

My goal, ultimately, is to graduate from Millersville in 2028 and follow in the footsteps of other women in my family.

I'd like to work as an elementary school teacher and being able to remain here in Pennsylvania, will allow me to stay within reach of their ongoing support.

Millersville is not only close to home, but it's well known for producing exceptional teachers and I consider myself fortunate to soon receive my educator training there.

It's no secret the rising cost of college has become so incredibly overwhelming for so many young people.

Part of the reason I chose Millersville is because their tuition rate has remained stable the last few years and they seem committed to keeping it that way. That's important to me and my family.

I don't want to have to take out a ton of student loans and spend my life repaying them, but I'll do what I have to do to make this dream a reality.

Having additional financial assistance will have an incredible impact on my ability to go to school, especially during student teaching when I won't be able to work.

I want to live, not just survive financially after I graduate. I've heard about so many people who are missing out on saving money for a house, a car, a vacation, because they are saddled with debt from college.

From what I've heard, the Grow PA proposals will help me and my friends get another step closer to starting the lives we have dreamed of.

We are excited and eager to serve of communities in this new way and start our adult lives here in Pennsylvania.

Thank you.