

My name is Sarah Kathleen Justice Hughes and it's a pleasure and honor to have written this testimony to be read and considered by this bill's esteemed sponsors.

I graduated from Northglenn High School in 2018, went to Front Range Community College where I graduated with an associate degree in general studies in 2020. Then I transferred to Metropolitan State University where I still attend. I always knew I'd be a transfer student. College is expensive and I pay for it on my own. So, I made the economic decision to best impact my financial future: I chose MSU. When making my university decision, I recall looking at various Colorado Universities who all had tuition and program costs readily available on their websites. This transparency is how universities are chosen. If an institution cannot demonstrate the care necessary to put the price tag on their education, then it clearly isn't worth an ounce of my time or anyone else's. I chose transparency: I chose Metro.

At my time of transfer, I assumed MSU would be able to determine all my credits were acceptable and I would be notified quickly about this decision. After all, a lot rides on that decision including my financial future. I'm a sustainable systems engineering major and one of my required classes is called 'Strengths of Materials'. A fellow classmate and I bonded over being transfer students and we told each other about our educational journeys. She told me she would have to retake several classes including Physics as MSU did not accept her credits from her previous school. Physics is a fundamental science, and I could not and cannot determine a situation where a university could teach such a class so incorrectly or incompetently that another university would not accept those credits. My classmate had no idea either and the school's decision was final. How such a decision was reached, using what criteria, and by whom was unknown to her. She simply foot the bill for that decision. I asked her if she could appeal the decision or bring it to the attention of someone or some party above those who determined that her credits were not transferable. She said there was none, and I confess I was bewildered. If I had any kind of court case I could appeal it, yet not a decision made about my education, about my future.

Ultimately, I was lucky. I was lucky Metro accepted all my credits. I was lucky I was informed of the acceptance in a timely fashion. I don't recall who exactly I talked to, but I was lucky to speak to someone efficient and thorough in their work. Luck should not define the amount of work a student needs to put into their education upon transferring. Fluke and happenstance have no place in any postsecondary education program, and I beg for my fellow students to not have to rely on rabbit's feet or four-leaf clovers to have transfer credits accepted. I ask for the senators listening to this to allow this bill to become law and help young Coloradans have a complete view of the collegiate options before them. I ask you to help Colorado youth succeed.

Thank you.