

STATE SALES TAX EXEMPTION FOR TEXTBOOKS

Whereas, Public institutions of higher education across the state of Ohio are committed to increasing the fraction of working age citizens with certificates and degrees by providing opportunities for high quality, affordable education;

Whereas, Textbook costs have increased by more than four times the rate of inflation (significantly more than the increase in the cost of medical care or new homes) since 2006 and by 945% since 1978;

Whereas, The U.S. Public Interest Research Group has found that nationwide textbook costs are approximately 26% of the cost of tuition at state universities and 72% of the cost of tuition at community colleges¹;

Whereas, A 2017 survey of more than 1,000 students from four-year colleges in the US and Canada found that 85% had delayed or avoided purchasing textbooks for their courses even though half did so expecting that their grades would be negatively impacted by their decision²;

Whereas, College and university students in Ohio paid between \$25 and \$30 million in sales tax on textbook purchases during the 2015-2016 academic year;

Whereas, many Faculty Senates at public institutions of higher education in Ohio (including Kent State University, Ohio State University, Ohio University, and Wright State University) have adopted resolutions in the past six months that support exempting textbooks from Ohio's state sales tax;

Whereas, Many states (e.g. Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia) specifically exempt textbook purchases for secondary education from sales tax³; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, The Ohio Faculty Council strongly supports legislation such as the 131st Ohio General Assembly's HB 308⁴ and the 132nd Ohio General Assembly's HB 337⁵ that would specifically exempt post-secondary textbooks from state sales tax as a means of making it easier for students at Ohio's public institutions of higher education to obtain a high quality education at an affordable price.

¹ <http://www.uspirg.org/news/usp/student-group-releases-new-report-textbook-prices>

² <https://www.insidehighered.com/quicktakes/2017/09/20/study-high-textbook-prices-lead-poor-grades>

³ <https://trustfile.avalara.com/blog/state-sales-tax-rules-for-textbook-purchases/>

⁴ <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/legislation-summary?id=GA131-HB-308>

⁵ <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation?5&pageSize=10&start=1&sort=LegislationNumber&dir=asc&statusCode&legislationNumber=337&generalAssemblies=132>