



Higher Education Coordinating Commission
775 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

BETTY DUVALL, CHAIR

April 8, 2013

NEIL BRYANT,
VICE-CHAIR

Senate Committee on Education and Workforce Development
900 Court Street NE, Room 453

JIM BERNAU

Salem, Oregon 97301

CHRIS BRANTLEY

RE: SB102

CHARLENE GOMEZ

Dear Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee:

NORI JUBA

AL KING

The undersigned are the chair and the vice-chair of the Higher Education Coordinating Commission ("HECC"). The HECC was appointed July 1, 2012 and has been meeting on a monthly basis to fulfill the responsibilities outlined in the 2011 legislation.

DAVID KRUMBEIN

CHARLES MICHAEL

ROSEMARY POWERS

One of the responsibilities included the oversight of the Office of Degree Authorization ("ODA"). In general, the HECC supports SB102 for the following reasons:

JAZMIN ROQUE

TONY VANVLIET

JAMES WOODS

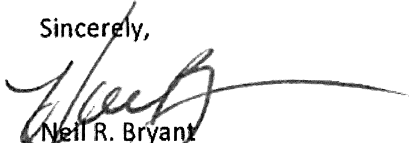
- a. Currently, there is a significant backlog in the review, approval, or denial of academic programs. Because of the advent of more for profit degree programs and more on-line degree programs, the workload has significantly increased. The Emergency Board approved one additional staff in September 2012. A New database may need to be purchased to help reduce the backlog.
- b. Current fees do not accurately reflect the work load associated with each degree. The majority of staff time is devoted to review of applications from on-line out-of -state colleges and evaluation of in-state for-profit colleges. Additionally, in the current fee structure, there are no fees charged for the regular review of program changes and review of faculty qualifications.
- c. The proposed fee structure will insure biennial evaluation of each school and reduce redundancy involving whole institutional reviews each time a new program is brought forward. The structure will also allow for more flexibility in

staffing assignment and further efficiencies. Additional fees will support a data-management system to allow for a more rapid turnaround of reviews.

We would welcome discussion as to whether or not the legislature wants to be involved in determining what the fees should be. Another option would be to delegate that responsibility to the HECC. This would allow more flexibility to adjust the fees based upon workload and the demands of the ODA.

The HECC looks forward to a continued dialogue. The commission is new and on a steep learning curve about ODA and the restructuring of higher education. The HECC clearly recognizes that ODA is not currently fulfilling its obligations to the institutions and students because of the backlog.

Sincerely,



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cc: Representative Michael Dembrow
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