



UPSTREAM
PUBLIC HEALTH

February 12, 2013

RE: Tuition Equity – HB 2787 Endorsement

Upstream Public Health strongly supports HB 2787, a bill that will ensure equal tuition rates for students living in Oregon, regardless of whether they are documented or undocumented residents. This will give immigrants the opportunity to pursue higher education and meet their full health and economic potential.

The 2006-2007 American Community Survey reports that only 7 percent of Latinos and only 27 percent of Asians residing in Oregon have achieved a bachelor's degree. These populations, who are more likely to be undocumented, are also at greater risk for increased health disparities including obesity and overweight, chronic diseases, low birth weights and early death.

Upstream Public Health advocates for policy solutions that improve the health and wellbeing of Oregonians. We support HB 2787 because higher education is a strong predictor for improved health outcomes. In fact, studies show that education and health outcomes are inextricably linked. Simply put, the more schooling people have, the better their health is likely to be.

A recent article in the peer-reviewed journal "Preventing Chronic Disease" outlines the various ways in which increased education leads to good health. Increased education:

- Facilitates healthier behavior choices by offering learners access to health information and tools
- Helps to acquire social support, strengthen social networks, and mitigate social stressors
- Helps people to gain a sense of control over their lives, an outcome associated with better health.

HB 2787 as an important bill that will give all Oregon students access to higher education, regardless of their immigration status. By giving all Oregon students access to higher education and the American dream, we are also increasing the overall health and well being of all Oregon students.

Sincerely,

Mel Rader

Co-Director, Upstream Public Health