



PETER COURTNEY
President of the Senate

House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee

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 Representative Chris Harker, Vice-Chair
 Representative John Huffman, Vice-Chair
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TESTIMONY BY SENATOR PETER COURTNEY
SUPPORTING HB 2787
FEBRUARY 13, 2013

Chair Michael Dembrow, Vice-Chairs Chris Harker and John Huffman, and members of the Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee: thank you for hearing my testimony today in support of House Bill 2787.

My name is Peter Courtney. I am a State Senator, and I live in NE Salem.

This session marks the 10 year anniversary of this bill's existence in Oregon's state legislature. In 2003, I was asked to introduce a tuition equity measure by the principal of Woodburn High School. I introduced SB 10. At that time, the Senate was tied 15-15, and the dynamics of the chamber were very interesting. This bill still passed on a bipartisan basis, by a vote of 22-8, demonstrating that an issue of this magnitude is not about political parties, it's about kids.

In the 2011 Regular Session, we passed this same measure, SB 742. The bill was again approved by an 18-11 bipartisan vote. It is my hope that this committee and the full House votes to send this bill over to the Senate for a third try.

I can say with certainty that all of you care about kids. You work day in and day out in your public lives and private lives to provide for kids. How many pieces of legislation, how many budget issues, how many hours will you spend to cut an easier path for children? Countless. The work doesn't stop here either, because this bill is about kids, kids, kids.

I've said it before: the only thing wrong with kids is adults. And this bill is about kids – who are where they are because of adults. These kids are in every one of our high schools. My kids are your kids and your kids are my kids. Together they're our kids; they're Oregon kids.

This bill would allow undocumented kids to qualify for in-state tuition if they have: