



RE: HB 2787, Tuition Equity
The Honorable Michael Dembrow
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Dembrow and Members of the Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee,

The Oregon Student Association encourages your support of House Bill 2787, more commonly known as Tuition Equity.

The Oregon Student Association is a coalition of student governments dedicated to the representation, service, and protection of the collective interests of over 100,000 students in postsecondary education. Our mission is to advocate for more affordable and accessible higher education for all Oregonians.

Tuition equity is good for Oregon.

The Oregon Student Association believes passing tuition equity will add money to strapped university budgets, open access to education, and help create the highly skilled workforce Oregon needs. As our general fund continues to dwindle, we must take proactive steps to ensure that we're educating as much of our future workforce as possible.

An educated workforce will not only provide more tax dollars for the state, but will help draw in businesses seeking cutting edge, highly skilled employees.

The fact of the matter is that while Oregon is federally mandated to provide a K-12 education for all children, regardless of documentation status, there is no such plan for post-secondary education. We need to capitalize on Oregon's investment in all K-12 students.

Tuition Equity isn't about granting special privileges or exceptions. It's simply a matter of ensuring that every Oregonian who wishes to pursue an education is able to do so, free of unfairly prohibitive economic sanctions.

That is the crux of our public higher education system, and a belief shared by our state's founders.

Now is Oregon's chance to join thirteen other states who have passed similar legislation to ensure that their original investment in undocumented students will yield greater returns in the future.

We support Tuition Equity because we don't want to see Oregon's educational investment go to waste.

We strongly encourage you to support it as well – vote "yes" on HB 2787.

Sincerely,
Members of the Oregon Student Association

Oregon Student Association
PHONE: (503) 286-0477 | FAX: (503) 286-0924
635 NE Dekum St. Portland, OR 97211



Oregon University System

Office of the Chancellor
P.O. Box 751
Portland, OR 97207-0751
PHONE (503) 725-5700
FAX (503) 725-5709
<http://www.ous.edu>

February 11, 2013

RE: Tuition Equity Legislation

The Honorable Representative Dembrow
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Dembrow and Members of the Higher Education and
Workforce Development Committee,

As the presidents of Oregon's public universities, we write in support of Tuition Equity legislation that would consider undocumented students to be Oregon residents for the purpose of determining tuition and fees at Oregon University System campuses. Many of these students have attended some or all of their K-12 education in the U.S., but due to the status of their parents, must pay out-of-state tuition at Oregon University System campuses.

Tuition Equity would grant in-state tuition to students who have lived in Oregon, attended Oregon schools, graduated from an Oregon high school, and been accepted to an Oregon University System institution, regardless of documentation status. This bill is an opportunity to reap the benefits of investments Oregon has already made in students throughout their K-12 education and move them along the educational continuum to help meet Oregon's 40-40-20 goals.

As we move out of the worst fiscal crisis in recent memory, the state cannot afford to leave Oregon students behind without the educational opportunities that will enable them to fully contribute to our state. Higher education is an investment in the civic, social, and economic health of Oregon and our institutions play a vital role in Oregon's economic development and social progress. Tuition Equity will enable us to provide access to an affordable, quality higher education to *all* qualified Oregon high school graduates.

Many students committed to education and who have excelled in their K-12 education through their own determination and focus, are also ready to succeed in postsecondary education. With postsecondary skills and training and a degree, these students can meet Oregon's workforce needs and contribute in positive and unique ways to our communities and our economy. If their only option is to pay nonresident tuition, which averages \$22,000 a year at OUS campuses, most if not all of these students will lack the resources to earn a college degree. The primary issue in determining student residency is one's intent to be permanently domiciled in Oregon. Students who will be affected by Tuition Equity fit this criterion, and are fully worthy of in-state tuition rates to Oregon University System schools.

Please support Tuition Equity legislation. All of us will reap the benefits of this investment in students who are Oregonians in every way except for society's label of them.

Sincerely,

President Bob Davies, Eastern Oregon University



President Chris Maples, Oregon Institute of Technology



President Ed Ray, Oregon State University



President Wim Wiewel, Portland State University



President Mary Cullinan, Southern Oregon University

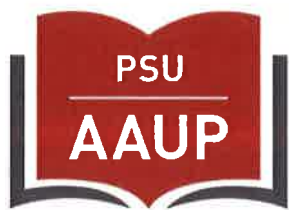


President Michael Gottfredson, University of Oregon



President Mark Weiss, Western Oregon University





PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

American Association of University Professors

Promoting Quality Higher Education – An Investment in Oregon's Future

12 February 2013

Chairman Michael Dembrow
House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee
Oregon House of Representatives
900 Court Street NE, Room 453
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chairman Dembrow:

On behalf of the American Association of University Professors at Portland State University, I write in support of the Tuition Equity bill 2787. This issue is one that we have supported strongly for some time. We appreciate your leadership on matters of access and quality for all Oregonians seeking higher education in our state.

Sincerely,

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS
PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Patricia A. Schechter'.

Professor Patricia A. Schechter
Chair, Legislative Committee

PO Box 751 · SMU 232 · Portland · OR · 97207
503.725.4414 · aaup@psuaaup.net · www.psuaaup.net



February 12, 2012

Caitlin Baggott, Executive Director, The Bus Project

Chair Dembrow; Members of the House Committee on Higher Education

Re: Letter of Support for House Bill 2787

Chair Dembrow, Members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Caitlin Baggott. I am the Executive Director of the Bus Project. We work to engage young people and new people in democracy here in Oregon. We strongly urge you to support House Bill 2787, to bring Tuition Equity to Oregon and strengthen Oregon's economic future by ensuring a more educated population and keeping top achievers in our state.

This legislative session, perhaps more than any other in recent memory, we need to find ways to make Oregon as competitive as possible in the global economy. While this is unquestionably a pressing need today, its importance will continue to grow year after year. We should be planting seeds of innovation and prosperity today, so that Oregon's economy can grow more globally competitive in the coming decades.

We know that an educated workforce is one of the most critical elements of a state's business-friendliness. It both attracts companies to our state and is a vital element of successful homegrown business. The recipe is simple: an educated Oregon is a competitive Oregon.

Oregon's students are extremely talented, but many pursue education out of state, potentially leaving Oregon permanently and reducing the attractiveness of our workforce. In-state tuition is one of the most fundamental things we can offer to talented students to keep them here, an investment to improve our economy and our quality of life. Without it, talented students simply have less incentive to attend Oregon institutions.

Without question, some of these talented students do not have documentation. Many have lived here nearly their entire lives, and had no choice in how they were brought here. They are working toward citizenship and, with a good Oregon education, can be a vital part of the new innovation economy. But because we do not offer these Oregonians in-state tuition, many either attend college out of state or opt out of college entirely. This does nothing but hurt Oregon's economy, today and especially in the future.

I would call Tuition Equity a great investment, except that investments cost money. Tuition Equity does not. Tuition Equity brings money into the state. Fiscal studies have found that Tuition Equity brings tuition dollars into a state's colleges and universities. This is because students eligible for Tuition Equity are not currently paying out-of-state tuition. They are not paying tuition to Oregon at all. Many are not attending college at all. That loses our state money and leads to further brain drain when we should instead be working to educate our state to compete with the rest of the world.



Tuition Equity is not simply an issue of basic fairness – although it is certainly that. It is a vital move to keep high achievers in Oregon and ensure our competitiveness in the real world.

The Bus Project strongly urges you to support House Bill 2787. Thank you very much for taking the time to review our letter of support for Tuition Equity.

Sincerely,

Caitlin Baggott



February 13, 2013

To: Members of the House Committee on Higher Education

Fr: Matt Swanson, SEIU Oregon State Council

Re: Please Support House Bill 2787

On behalf of the 60,000 members of SEIU in Oregon, we urge you to support passage of House Bill 2787. Immigrants who dared to dream they could become stronger together as a union founded our national union more than 90 years ago. Today, our dreams are no different. SEIU fights for all workers, no matter where they come from.

This bill is about providing an opportunity for bright, talented and deserving students to pursue their education. Through no fault of their own, they have been treated unfairly by our immigration system and as a result, our education system. We know that the vast majority of the American public agrees that it is time to step up and do the right things for students who are qualified and grant them the ability to attend colleges and universities at the same price as their high school classmates.

We have always known that tuition equity is the right thing to do and, clearly now is the time to take action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Matt Swanson'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Matt Swanson
SEIU Oregon State Council



DATE: February 13, 2013

TO: House Higher Education and Workforce Development, Chair Dembrow and Members

FROM: Oregon Education Association

RE: Support House Bill 2787 [Tuition Equity]

On behalf of the Oregon Education Association, we urge your support for House Bill 2787. As a professional organization representing educators serving Oregon students from kindergarten to higher education, we are committed to equity and access to a high-quality education for all Oregonians. HB 2787 provides students who are undocumented but have grown up in Oregon and attended Oregon public schools an affordable pathway to a post-secondary education.

We believe a high-quality post-secondary education in Oregon must be available to and affordable for all. Minors have little say over their residency or documentation status. Yet, these students have lived here, been educated in our schools and made contributions to our communities. These students ought to have the chance to qualify for in-state tuition and the choice to further their education without being priced out of the opportunity to attend college.

HB 2787 would have a beneficial impact on our economy by promoting a skilled workforce. By making it possible for more Oregonians to attend college in-state, HB 2787 will help ensure that Oregon students contribute their skills to helping grow the economy here at home.

We urge your support for equity and opportunity for all Oregonians by pass House Bill 2787.



Stand for Children
1732 NW Quimby Street, Suite 200
Portland, OR 97209

Oregon State House of Representatives
Higher Education Committee
Representative Michael Dembrow (Portland), Chair
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

February 12, 2013

Dear Representative Dembrow:

On behalf of Stand for Children members through the state, I write in support of House Bill (HB) 2787 - the Tuition Equity bill. We believe this legislation will provide an opportunity for talented long-time Oregon students who have graduated from an Oregon high school and been accepted to an Oregon college to attend college at in-state tuition rates.

Tuition Equity is a no-cost investment in education. This legislation capitalizes on our K-12 investment. Further, the Oregon University System recently found that similar legislation would be revenue positive for Oregon's universities. This legislation also encourages citizenship. Because the legislation requires long-time Oregon students to sign an affidavit of intent to pursue legal status, it moves these students toward citizenship and helps them build productive futures in Oregon.

We truly believe that passing this legislation is an issue of basic fairness. The students most directly helped by the bill have been caught between a rock and a hard place - they had no control over how they got here, but Oregon is their home and they want to build their lives here. HB 2787 helps them achieve this dream.

Further, HB 2787 will make Oregon a more competitive place to live. By providing more students the opportunity to attend college in our state, this bill helps achieve the educated workforce we need to attract new businesses to our state and compete in the global economy. That is why this bill has strong support the leaders and innovators that will drive great Oregon-grown industry for a new generation.

Tuition Equity is a smart, no-cost investment in Oregon's 21st Century economy and is the right thing to do. We fully support HB 2787.

Sincerely,

Toya Fick
Government Affairs Director, Stand for Children

THE OREGON IDEA

SUPPORT OUR STUDENTS, COMMUNITY COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

Representative Michael Dembrow, Chair
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: House Bill 2787 (Tuition Equity) -- Support

Dear Chair Dembrow and Committee Members:

On behalf of The Oregon Idea, we are pleased to support House Bill 2787 as a means to facilitate the full and equal participation of Oregon's high school graduates in our institutions of higher education.

The Oregon Idea is a coalition of business and community leaders, students, and alumni of Oregon's community colleges and public universities who are committed to ensuring that our post-secondary institutions have the resources needed to serve all Oregonians – from all backgrounds and all corners of the state – to meet the challenges and fulfill the potential of a dynamic economy.

HB 2747 is long overdue, given the increasing numbers of immigrant children who are graduating from our high schools and are motivated to continue their educations and contribute to our economy. For too long, these students have been treated as outsiders and face unaffordable tuition barriers in the Oregon University System. But, now that President Obama has opened a pathway to legal residence and work for these students, there is no reason of equity or economy to deny equal access for these students to our universities and to deprive our state of their skills and ambitions.

Now is Oregon's chance to join the ten other states that have passed similar legislation to ensure that their original investment in all students will yield greater returns in the future.

The Oregon Idea strongly encourages your support for this legislation.

Sincerely,



Ryan M. Robinson
Executive Director, The Oregon Idea

Testimony of David Rives President, American Federation of Teachers-Oregon

Hello, my name is David Rives, and as well as being the President of the American Federation of Teachers in Oregon, I am also an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teacher at Portland Community College.

Let me begin by telling you a little about the American Federation of Teachers-Oregon. We represent 15,000 members across the state. Our members live in every legislative district in Oregon and work in the private and public sectors in elementary and high schools, child care centers, community colleges and four-year colleges and institutions, to health care clinics and hospitals. AFT members work as classified employees, faculty, instructors, graduate teachers, early educators and in health care professions. AFT-Oregon represents members at the University of Oregon, Portland State University, Oregon State University, Western Oregon University, and Eastern Oregon University. Nationally, of AFT's 1.5 million members, nearly 200,000 are higher education faculty, professional staff and graduate employees—more than any other national organization.

AFT-Oregon believes that Tuition Equity is the right thing to do for the youth of Oregon. We must expand educational opportunities to our youth who have grown up in Oregon and attended Oregon's Public Schools. Without Tuition Equity these students would be forced to pay out-of-state tuition at a rate three times higher than that of other Oregonians.

I teach a wide diversity of students in English for Speakers of Other Languages, they speak different first languages, are different ages, come from different backgrounds, and have different goals for using their English skills. These students share a strong drive to learn English and do better for both themselves and their families. Whenever a student tells me how they'd like to pursue a four-year degree, I am there to advise them on how to develop the necessary language and academic skills and to apply to a university. Sometimes I'll hear from a student that they can't apply to a university due to the high cost of out-of-state tuition and the unavailability of financial aid. I don't pry when the students' express these barriers to higher education, but it becomes apparent when I talk to them that it is because of their residency status. These young people with such high potential face a lifetime of limitations because they could not access higher education. We owe it to the youth of our society to help them reach their full potential.

Tuition Equity is the right thing to do for the future of Oregon.

Thank you.



**Testimony of Becky Straus, Legislative Director
In Support of HB 2787
House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development
February 13, 2013**

Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to express our support for HB 2787, which seeks to expand access to education for Oregon's high school graduates, regardless of where they were born or their current immigration status. Our organization has a proud history of advocating for the fair treatment of all persons here in Oregon. We support HB 2787 because it is an important step towards ensuring that Oregon's laws treat all students fairly.

A smart and fair improvement to benefit all of Oregon

All Oregonians deserve fair access to the high quality and affordable educational opportunities provided by the Oregon's colleges and universities. Ensuring that access substantially furthers principals of fundamental fairness. Students who will benefit from HB 2787 are, by and large, talented high-achievers who arrived in Oregon as children as the result of choices made by their parents. These students grew up in Oregon, they persevered against the odds to excel, they graduated from Oregon high schools, and they are otherwise eligible for admission to an Oregon college or university on equal terms with their friends and classmates. HB 2787 will modestly ensure that many students in Oregon who cannot prove lawful presence can nonetheless access the educational opportunities that they have already earned.

Furthermore, many of the undocumented students who stand to benefit from this bill are likely to become legal residents or American citizens under either current or future immigration laws. For this reason, denying these students access to an affordable college education is shortsighted. These students— who are our neighbors, our friends, and often our family members—are already an integral part of the Oregon community. There is an indisputably strong correlation between increased educational opportunities for young people and improved life chances in later years. And, having already established roots in Oregon, students who have graduated from Oregon high schools are likely to remain in the state upon graduating from an Oregon college or university and continue to contribute to this state's vibrancy.

It is time for Oregon to join the national trend toward Tuition Equity

To date, twelve states have laws allowing students who meet specific requirements, regardless of their status, to pay in-state tuition rates at public post-secondary institutions: California, Connecticut, Illinois, Kansas, Maryland, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York, Oklahoma, Texas, Utah, and Washington. Rhode Island's Board of Governors for Higher Education adopted a policy permitting eligible students to pay in-state tuition rates, regardless of their status. Minnesota offers a "flat" tuition rate to students, regardless of their status. New Mexico, Texas,

and California provide access to state financial aid to students who meet certain criteria, regardless of status. Illinois established a "DREAM" fund commission to raise money for scholarships to help children of immigrants.

2013 presents an opportunity for additional states to make similar progress, including Oregon. Colorado is likely to enact a tuition equity bill this year. Tuition equity bills also have been introduced in Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, and New Jersey. Similar bills are expected in Arkansas and Pennsylvania.

Bills in Connecticut and New York would provide access to state financial aid for eligible students regardless of status. Something similar is likely in Washington.

It is time for Oregon to move Tuition Equity forward. We request that you move HB 2787 to the House floor. Thank you for your consideration of this important issue. Please feel free to be in touch at any time with comments or questions.