



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

March 19, 2013

Senator Mark Hass- Chair, Senate Education & Workforce Development Committee
Members of the Senate Education and Workforce Development Committee

Chair Hass and members of the committee,

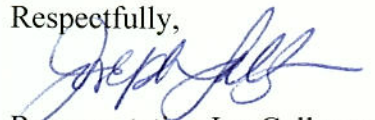
We talk a lot in this building about education. The value of a solid education, both to Oregonians and small businesses in Oregon, is vital. Without a highly educated workforce, we lack innovation, lack creation, and lack family wage jobs. Before you today is a bill that will help to fulfill our state's vision of what our education system should be. This bill can support the economic environment that is crucial to job creation, and it will help to meet our 40-40-20 goals.

House Bill 2787, otherwise known as Tuition Equity, improves high school and college graduation rates by giving a clear message to students that we want them to succeed at the high school level, and have the opportunity to go on to college. By giving student who do well and play by the rules the chance to afford a college education, we can create a more highly skilled and educated workforce, giving us a leg up in our fight to stay at the forefront of today's global economy.

When Oregonians reach a higher level of educational attainment, their salaries rise. Increased earnings support increased consumer buying power, more local purchasing and decreased reliance on government assistance programs.

Finally, the bill is about social justice. We do not choose where we are born or even where it is that we grow up. But, we do choose what to do with the life that was given to us. This bill will provide an opportunity for young people, who have chosen to work hard and compete for admission to our universities along with other Oregon students, to reach for their full potential. This bill is a win-win proposition for these students and for our state. Tuition equity is not only fair, it's sound economic policy. I urge you to do the right thing and support House Bill 2787.

Respectfully,



Representative Joe Gallegos

CC: Richard Donovan, Committee Administrator

