



OREGON STATE SENATE

"Colleges and universities will find themselves converted into educational hobo jungles. This is a threat to American education. Education is not a device for coping with unemployment."

-- Robert Maynard Hutchins
University of Chicago President 1929 to 1951

That quote from a university president was in response to creating the GI Bill, a program that is probably the most successful educational program in the history of the world, one that transformed our workforce into the best in the world and helped move millions of families into the middle class.

1. The bill before us today has many things in common with that GI bill: It's a recognition we need to fill the skills gap, provide a workforce that helps prevent our manufacturing jobs from going over-seas, move greater numbers of workers into the middle class, and increase the possibility that the graduates will remain in their local communities and contribute to the local economy.

2. Increased enrollments into two-year programs which result in a more highly trained workforce and/or a solid preparation for a four-year or greater education.
The economic certainty is that the jobs of the future in healthcare, technical fields and manufacturing will need more highly trained and skilled workers. Community colleges train mechanics and welders and nurses and public safety officers along with computer and communication technicians.

3. Reduce the mounting debt that current students amass in four-year loans --\$1.2 trillion according to Tom Snyder writing for the Huffington Post. While the community college program is not completely free (books and incidental costs) it does provide for a lessening of the costs for the first two years for four-year students while graduating two year students with the prospects of higher paying jobs.

3. So, to those who are nervous about changing the status quo and making this work is the combining of the our very best thinking so that not only do we have students enter community colleges, but to have them stay, learn, and graduate. We're open to considering any and all suggestions to make this program a success. We are not interested in hearing about "hobo jungles".