

## Oregon Public University Council

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To: Chair Tobias Read and Members of the House Committee on Higher Education, Innovation and Workforce Development

From: Oregon's Public Universities

Subject: Options for HB 2973 - \$10K degree

Date: March 9, 2015

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Oregon's Public Universities are committed to providing Oregonians with affordable four year degrees, and we are open to exploring the best routes to accomplish that end.

The concept of a \$10,000 year degree has been a part of national conversations in higher education, several states, including Texas and Florida, have made steps to implement a \$10,000 degree. The idea raises many questions about the feasibility that warrant careful consideration, such as what modality (in-person, on-line, podcast, etc.) could contain cost, how many services could be reasonably extended to students pursuing the option, and, critically, whether the learning outcomes would be satisfactory to the student, employers, accreditors, and the state. We have the opportunity to learn from experiments in other states before pursuing a policy that may have unseen fiscal and policy implications.

We again reiterate our commitment to offering affordable degrees and have many examples of where we have sought to increase affordability. For example, the bachelor of applied sciences degrees offered by Oregon's Technical and Regional Universities present one case where students may attain a four-year degree with limited costs. We offer this as one option for exploring whether or not a degree in the \$10 - \$12,000 range is possible.

Should the committee choose to act on this issue, we recommend that it ask the HECC to study the issue further and present recommendations.

Lita Colligan is available as a representative of the public universities if the committee wishes to explore the issue further. She can be reached at [lita.colligan@oit.edu](mailto:lita.colligan@oit.edu).

CC:

Ben Cannon, Executive Director, HECC