

Hearing for SB 932

3/24/2015

Amy Magnussen, Guidance Coordinator, Clatsop Community College
amagnussen@clatsopcc.edu

Chair Roblan and members of the committee thank you for this opportunity to testify. My name is Amy Magnussen. I work as a Guidance Coordinator at Clatsop Community College in Astoria on the NW coast.

I'm here today to testify in support of Senate Bill 932

My work at Clatsop Community College is focused on assisting low income and first generation students overcome barriers to achieving their degrees goals. A portion of my advisees are undocumented students planning to transfer to universities. In this capacity, I have become familiar with Tuition Equity and through direct work with my students believe modifications to the Tuition Equity law are needed.

While the passage of Tuition Equity in 2013 reduced the cost of obtaining a university degree, it remains a daunting task to pay for a bachelor's degree without state or federal support. Additionally, the five year time limitations for completion make paying for a university education an economic hardship some students are unable to surmount at costs ranging from \$21-24,000 a year. Additional barriers exist for students who take longer than three years to finish an associate's degree on their way to a university.

Since 1982, states have provided k-12 education to all students regardless of immigration status. It seems incongruent to limit the educational development of immigrant students at the same time we seek to build a workforce poised to address an economy that will disproportionately depend on jobs requiring higher education and specialized skills. According to qualityinfo.org, 50% of the jobs appearing on OED's Occupational Prioritization list for the rural communities of Clatsop, Tillamook & Columbia Counties require a bachelor's degree or higher. On average only 20% of the current population residing in these counties meet this requirement. Isn't it in the best interest of our state & regional economies to encourage and support advancing the education of these capable individuals?

The modifications to the previous Tuition Equity Bill will ensure that Oregon's brightest immigrant students will have the opportunity and financial support to continue their education. This is a win-win opportunity for students and the state of Oregon and will improve the quality, diversity, and skill of Oregon's future workforce.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. Please feel free to follow-up with any questions.