



March 31, 2015

TO: Senate Committee on Education

FROM: Leslie Sutton, Oregon Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Coalition

RE: Support for SB 619

Chair Roblan and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Coalition (IDD Coalition) is a group of approximately 30 organizations across Oregon that promote quality services, equality and community integration for Oregonians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) and their families.

The IDD Coalition believes that everyone benefits when a person with a disability has the supports they need to live a healthy and fulfilling life as a member of their community. This includes pursuing post-secondary education consistent with an individual's choice, whether that be through credit or non-credit classes. Public university admissions rules and policies must support the option for students with disabilities to attend noncredit classes – regardless of the type of diploma the student earned or did not earn.

The IDD Coalition **supports SB 619** because it removes a barrier to accessing higher education that could affect many individuals. SB 619 prohibits public universities from adopting school policies for noncredit academic activities, or from refusing a student application to, or enrollment or participation in, a noncredit academic activity, solely on basis that student was not awarded a standard high school diploma or a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, or because a student received only a modified or extended diploma.

This bill does exactly what we should be doing - removing barriers to accessing public education so that all individuals have the opportunity to achieve their potential, prepare themselves for rewarding careers, and lead healthy and fulfilling lives as valued members of the communities in which they live.



Oregon has high expectations for all students, including students with disabilities. The Oregon 40-40-20 education policy applies to all students, including students with disabilities. All students should be encouraged to pursue additional education after exiting high school, whether it be by taking credit or noncredit classes.

The ability to access noncredit classes should not be based on the type of school-leaving document a person attains. These classes should be open to all members of the community on equal footing, regardless of background or standing.

We encourage you to move SB 619 to the Senate floor with a “do pass” to ensure the doors of public universities are open to all students.