

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Higher Education, Innovation, and Workforce Development

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 03/20/15

Action: Do Pass With Amendments, Be Printed Engrossed And Be Referred To Ways
And Means By Prior Reference.

Meeting Dates: 02/20, 03/20

Vote:

Yeas: 9 - Gallegos, Hayden, Johnson, McKeown, Nearman, Read, Reardon, Whisnant, Williamson

Prepared By: Victoria Cox, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Allows Oregon Opportunity Grants to be awarded to highest need students when funds are insufficient to award all eligible students. Guarantees second year award to students who reapply and meet eligibility requirements. Permits development of program to provide additional incentives for students completing 15 or more credits per term. Requires Office of Student Access and Completion to inform post-secondary institutions of qualified students attending institution for purpose of providing academic counseling and guidance. Directs Higher Education Coordinating Commission to report annually to Legislative Assembly regarding academic success and performance of qualified students. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Inability of funding to keep up with provisions of shared responsibility model
- Desire to prioritize students with greatest need
- Incentives for students to complete degree programs in four years
- Importance of support services to persistence and completion
- Need for data on performance of students receiving grants

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon's need-based financial aid program, the Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG), has not been reevaluated since the adoption of the state's 40-40-20 goals for higher education. The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) convened a Financial Aid Work Group to study the OOG program and make recommendations focusing on improved student access and completion for students with the greatest need and progress toward 40-40-20. Currently, grants are awarded on a first-come first-served basis and the number of applicants greatly exceeds the available funds.

House Bill 2407-A directs the HECC to implement programs to ensure that students with the greatest financial need are prioritized and that those receiving the OOG for one year also receive the grant a second year if they continue to meet qualifying criteria.