

**PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**House Committee On Higher Education, Innovation, and Workforce Development**

**Fiscal:** Has minimal fiscal impact

**Revenue:** No Revenue Impact

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**Action Date:**

**Action:**

**Meeting Dates:**

**Prepared By:** Victoria Cox, Committee Administrator

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Directs Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to evaluate waiving tuition for students at community colleges and public universities who are pursuing mathematics-related degrees. Clarifies that HECC may consider multiple methodologies for increasing number of math majors in Oregon. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:**

No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:**

Tuition prices have reportedly increased 58 percent at public community colleges and 72 percent at public four-year institutions nationally over the last decade (See College Board's *Trends in College Pricing*). States are increasingly exploring means to improve access to affordable postsecondary education. Two prominent examples are Senate Bill 81 (2015), the "Oregon Promise," and Tennessee's "Promise Scholarship" program. Both programs provide tuition waivers for qualifying residents to attend community college.

Senate Bill 1540-A directs the higher Education Coordinating Commission to evaluate the possibility of providing tuition waivers for students at community colleges and public universities who are pursuing mathematics-related degrees and requires and report its findings to the Legislature no later than January 15, 2017.