

February 23, 2017

House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development
HB 2369

Background: senior vice president and regional manager for the mid-valley, central and eastern Oregon for First Interstate Bank of Oregon. Responsible for 52 branches, approximately 700 employees and \$1 billion in assets. Previous positions. Credit analyst, developed and taught a class on financial analysis and loan structure to lending officers and managers. Special credits officer, where we did work out loans on companies like Chrysler or Continental Airlines. National account officer responsible for all bank relationships west of the Mississippi for companies headquartered outside of Oregon but had operations in Oregon.

I do not have a business degree nor could I pass after, 2 attempts, classes in accounting. I was on the Business Advisory Council for Oregon State University's College of business. In attendance of one meeting, the president at Oregon State wanted to know how many hours of philosophy should be included in a business degree. I told them that instead of chasing change in the business community, why not teach students the things that don't change, such as principals or ethics as opposed to situational principles.

I would hire the college students for my region usually about 25 per year. During orientation the night before the interviews, the students asked me a few questions. First they want to know what I did. I told them not what you think. You think I'm responsible for loans, deposits, personnel, and facilities. I'm not. I get paid for what I don't do. With limited time I'm paid to identify those activities that should be delegated. The most interesting question was, what did I look for in during the interview.

I told them not would you think. You think I look at your transcripts, you think I look at your work experience, and your professor's valuations. I don't. If I spent 30 min. with you and I don't have fun; why would I want to spend the next 20 years not having fun. If I have fun then I'll pull your file.

I didn't know nor did I care if any of my employees had a college degree.

As a final comment; when I went to college I was able to work part-time, complete my degree with no student debt. Now the state has withdrawn their support and the student makes up the difference in student debt. You shouldn't call it a student loan. I think you should call it for what it is, a tax for current budget shortfalls. The student should know when they make a payment it's not a loan payment it's a tax payment. Then you can define what should be reduced in their tax responsibilities.

Respectfully submitted, Tim Cowan, the citizens lobbyist tm

Due to a prior committment I may not be available for oral testimony until 3:30 – 3:45.