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Measure Description:

Requires Higher Education Coordinating Commission to establish guidelines for reimbursing in-state tuition expenses for upper-division mathematics classes.

Government Unit(s) Affected:

Department of Education

Analysis:

This fiscal impact statement is for the purpose of transmitting the measure from the Senate Committee on Education to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means. The bill directs the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to make rules that specify guidelines for reimbursing in-state tuition students for the tuition costs of upper-division classes in mathematics at public universities. To qualify for this tuition reimbursement the student must receive a grade of “B” or better in the qualified mathematics class, have an over-all grade point average of 2.5 or higher, be enrolled as at least a half-time student, making satisfactory progress toward and undergraduate degree in mathematics, and submit an application for reimbursement to the public university. Public universities must reimburse students, who qualify for this reimbursement, by direct payment or by issuing credit to offset the student’s tuition. Reimbursement costs to the universities are to be funded by an appropriation of an unspecified amount.

The bill further establishes the Task Force on Creating Incentives for Mathematics Teaching in Oregon. Membership for the taskforce consists of the following: two members of the Senate, two members of the House, the Chief Education Officer, a representative from HECC, three representatives from public universities, two representatives from community colleges, five teachers from public schools, and a representative from an Education Service District. The taskforce is charged with developing strategies to increase the number of teachers who teach mathematics, and increase the number of minority students who study mathematics. The taskforce must submit a report with recommendations for legislation to an interim committee of the Legislative Assembly no later than September 15, 2018. The Department of Education is directed to provide staff support to the task force. Members of the task force who are not members of the Legislative Assembly are not entitled to compensation or reimbursement for expenses. The task force is repealed December 31, 2018

Further Analysis Required

There is a fiscal impact associated with reimbursing public universities for tuition costs, and there may be a cumulative fiscal impact associated with the task force membership and staff support; the amount of this impact is still being determined. A more complete fiscal analysis on the bill will be prepared as the measure is considered in the Joint Committee on Ways and Means.