



Testimony on Senate Bill 395
Senate Education Committee
March 23, 2017

Chair Roblan, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and members of the Committee. My name is Kyle Thomas and I am the Director of Legislative and Policy Affairs for the Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

I would just like to highlight a couple of logistical points regarding the implementation of this bill. The simplest way to track students between the Department of Human Services and institutions is via social security numbers. However, not all institutions collect social security numbers from students. Without this form of personal identification, the tracking of all foster youth through the higher education system will entail matching based on name and date of birth, which may result in some minor data errors.

Additionally, because we expect there may be multiple institutions with foster youth enrollments that are very small, we may not be able to report enrollment or completion totals for some colleges and universities, in order to mitigate the risk of the disclosure of personally identifying information.

Finally, if this legislation passes, HECC would engage in a data sharing agreement with the Department of Human Services to acquire the list of foster youth necessary to match names with college and university data. No further information is required from institutions.

Thank you for your time. Please contact me if you have any questions.