

Chair Doherty, Vice-Chairs, and members of the committee, my name is Skye Arnold; I am here to discuss House Bill 3267.

Twenty-three; the number of schools I attended kindergarten through graduation. Forty-two; the number of times I was displaced in the first 18 years of my life. Difficult to place youth, unlikely to graduate, intervention required. The adults in my life, not aware they talked over me instead of to me. If they had asked I would have told them what I'll tell you.

I wanted to graduate without the modified diploma that I was being pushed towards, a goal I achieved with much difficulty. I wanted to prove that although I lived in few places longer than 3 months and some even as short as two weeks I was capable of the most basic success in life, graduation. I attended four high schools two of which were alternative schools that lacked the resources to educate a youth who was learning at grade level, testing above grade level in every area of study.

My GPA was lowered as I moved because often I was moved during term and placed in classes that I was either finished with already or not yet ready to take on. Often put in classes with available seats instead of classes I actually needed. I graduated with over 26 credits total, a GPA of 2.25 and was told I had barely earned the diploma I was being handed. It was difficult enough completing high school, made even more so by my lack of confidence academically. Why would I believe I could graduate if I was being told I was incapable of being held to the same standards as other students and not given the resources I'd needed to succeed?

Credits didn't transfer well due to the differences in how each school district divided terms resulting in trimester credits being rounded down to semester standards.

If I'd only had to satisfy the Oregon graduation requirements I would not have had to repeat many of my classes written under different names and titles in separate school districts. For example, I took Civics twice as a freshman once as a sophomore and once as a senior because civics was written under US Citizenship as an elective the first three times I completed it. House Bill 3267 would focus on fixing the problems I've presented.

Additional information

Skye S.L. Arnold graduated with a St. Helens School District Diploma in June of 2011, time in foster care system ended in June of 2009. IEP student, not related to academic inability to perform in the classroom.