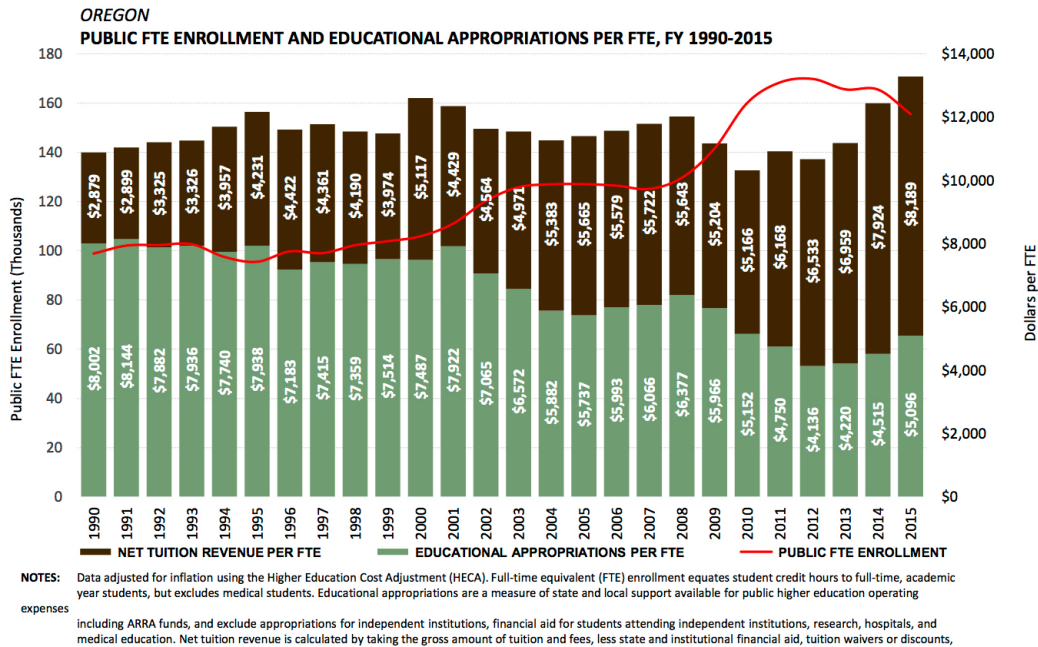


Though I've only been a classified worker in Oregon higher education since 2005, I have worked at public and private higher education institutions since the 1980s providing information technology expertise to students, faculty and staff. From 2013-2016, I served on Oregon's Higher Education Coordinating Commission. There I saw how Oregon's higher education system has been slowly becoming less and less affordable for the last 25 years. Students are being asked to shoulder more of the costs, as universities are being held financially responsible for fixed expenses beyond their control.

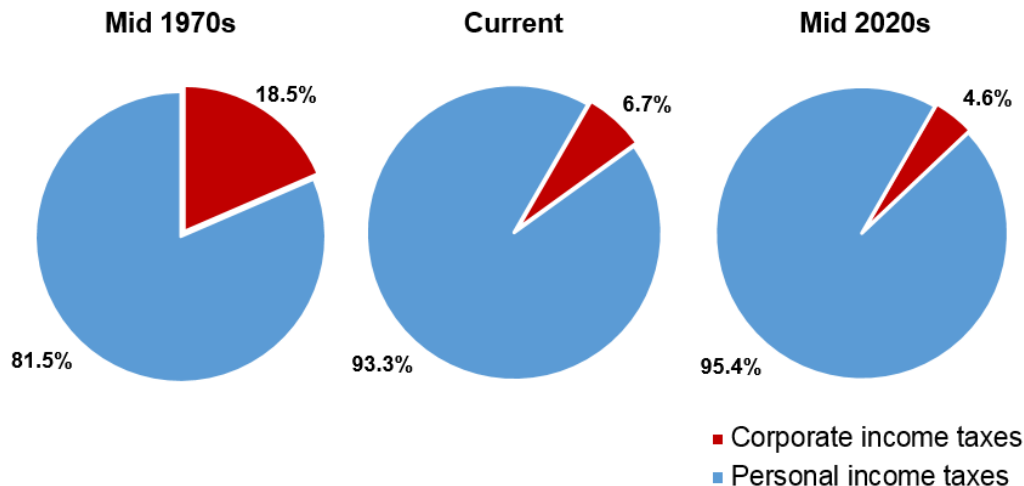
OREGON PUBLIC FTE ENROLLMENT AND EDUCATIONAL APPROPRIATIONS PER FTE, FY 1990-2015



Data Source: 2015 State Higher Education Finance Report, SHEEO, <http://www.sheeo.org>

There are more students and the state has been unable to find a way to properly fund their higher education costs. The contribution per student is down even setting costs aside entirely. So what changed?

Corporate share of income taxes has shrunk and will continue to shrink



Corporate and personal share of Oregon income taxes.
Source: OCPP analysis of Legislative Revenue Office and Office of Economic Analysis data.

Through legislative tax incentives, Oregon has created a corporate tax system that has effectively reduced its tax base to one where personal income taxes make up nearly all the state's general funds budget. Corporate contributions relative to the state's total revenue base are down. Speaker Kotek and Senator Haas are offering a sensible mechanism to reverse this decline and end the gradual pricing out of many students from public higher education. It's a good start, but more is needed to overcome past financial mistakes and put the state back on the right track for education.

We want to be a state that properly funds education. But we're not. We want to be a state where everyone who benefits from the economy, contributes equitably to fund schools and services. But we're not. If we're waiting for a consensus from the business community that it's good for their business to contribute more for an educated workforce... well, we've been waiting for 25 years. It's time to act, Oregon's students can't wait any longer.