



Testimony on House Bill 2314
House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee
February 7, 2017

Chair Reardon, Vice-Chairs Whisnant and Alonso León, and members of the Committee. For the record, my name is Kyle Thomas and I am the Director of Legislative and Policy Affairs for the Higher Education Coordinating Commission. Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 2314. This bill makes a number of minor changes to the higher education statutes.

Section 1: This section removes cosmetology hourly training standards from the state statutes. This change allows the HECC to modify and adopt standards by rule, and update them as needed to be responsive to developments in the cosmetology field. If this bill passes, and if the -1 amendment is adopted, the HECC plans to make changes to the minimum standards that will allow the next entering class of students to spend less time and money in preparing for their career.

Section 2: This section makes ORS 350.085 consistent with language in ORS 350.075. We believe the intent of the legislature, as written in ORS 350.075 is that the Commission approves university mission statements. ORS 350.075 is explicit in this regard, and this change ensures the same language is used throughout the statutes.

Sections 3-5: These sections correct references to the State Board of Education, recognizing that the Higher Education Coordinating Commission now oversees the work of the Office of Community Colleges and Workforce Development, not the State Board of Education.

Section 6: This section modifies the language around the ASPIRE (Access to Student Assistance Programs in Reach of Everyone) program to reflect the actual activities of the program across a continuum of students from middle school to college.

Sections 7-9: These sections ensure that HECC has the statutory to engage in procurement for activities it is already charged to conduct by law. It does not expand HECC's authority to undertake new activities, but allows it to execute contracts and agreements for those activities for which it is authorized.

Sections 10, 23, and 33-61: These sections change the title of the head of the Office of Student Access and Completion (OSAC) from "Executive Director" to "Director," recognizing that OSAC now exists as an office within the Higher Education Coordinating Commission

Sections 11-13: These sections transfer, from the Treasury to the Oregon Community Foundation, \$900,000 in funds that provide the principal for a hairdressing scholarship in order to allow the funds to be invested according to an investment strategy more in line with the goal and timeline of the investment.

Sections 14-32: These sections amend the statutes regarding high school proficiency exams to allow for proficiency measures other than the General Equivalency Degree (GED®). While the GED® is the only current recognized test in Oregon, this change allows flexibility in examining or adopting other tests. Other testing and education firms, such as Educational Testing Service (HiSET test) and McGraw-Hill Education (TASC test) offer alternatives to the American Council on Education GED® exam that are coming into increasing use nationwide.

Thank you again for the opportunity to discuss this legislation. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.