



Testimony on House Bill 2474
House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee
February 21, 2017

Good afternoon Chair Reardon, Vice-Chairs Alonso León and Whisnant, 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 want to provide just a couple of brief comments on the bill before you.

While students and families are able to borrow for educational expenses outside of programs sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, US DOE prohibits institutions from requiring that students complete counseling outside of the entrance and exit counseling otherwise recommended or required by the federal government as a condition of a student receiving a federal loan. As written, it the current language of the bill may come into conflict with federal requirements.

Institutions are allowed under federal guidelines to provide additional information to students, such as through reinforcing certain messages during the loan disbursement process, or by making counseling, interactive tools, and regular news and information available to students, as long as receiving a loan is not contingent on the student's participation in any additional activities.

HECC appreciates the opportunity to work with the sponsor of the legislation and the committee on any efforts undertaken to clarify this legislation.

Thank you for your time and attention today. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.