

HB 4035 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development

Prepared By: Laura Kentnesse, LPRO Analyst

Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/6

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires the Higher Education Coordinating Commission provide full resident tuition assistance at community colleges and public universities for qualifying members of the Oregon National Guard (ONG). Specifies that qualified members are students who have not yet achieved a baccalaureate or higher degree, are enrolled and have a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 or higher in a community college associate degree granting program or public university baccalaureate degree granting program, and are members of the ONG who have completed basic training.

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Has indeterminate fiscal impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Changes limits for the HECC to provide tuition assistance to qualified students up to 90 rather than 70 credit hours at a community college, and 180 rather than 120 credit hours at a public university. Allows for the 100 percent resident tuition coverage to be sourced from both tuition assistance under this bill, as well as any other scholarships or financial assistance received by the student.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon National Guard (ONG) consists of the Oregon Army National Guard and Oregon Air National Guard, and is charged with supporting the governor during unrest or natural disaster. It is also a reserve force to the United States Air Force and United States Army.

Currently, members of the ONG receive certain educational benefits and scholarships through the federal government. The most common federal benefit programs include the Post-9/11 and Montgomery GI bills, though ONG members do not always qualify for benefits based on requirements such as deployment duration, or receive benefits that do not cover all education expenses.

Oregon does not currently offer state tuition assistance or other educational benefits to ONG members. Statutory language for a tuition waiver program exists under ORS 399.275; the program is managed by the Oregon Military Department who may contract with the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to disburse tuition waiver moneys. However, the program has not been funded in recent years.