



Service Employees International Union, Local 503, OPEU

To: Senate Education Chair Arnie Roblan; Vice Chair Dennis Linthicum and Committee members

From: SEIU Local 503 – Len Norwitz, Senior Political Organizer

Re: SB 1520 – Section 12

Date: February 7, 2018

SEIU represents about 4500 classified workers on the seven University campuses. Our members maintain grounds and all campus spaces; support libraries; IT; health services; nutrition and academic programs in most of the non-teaching and non-management positions on campus. We support student success.

But we see Higher Education issues from a second important vantage point – as over half of our 65,000 SEIU statewide members are low wage earners; most without health care and retirement benefits. They and their families know that post-secondary training and education is the way out of poverty for their families; neighbors; clients and loved ones. Higher Education access and affordability drives our interests as well.

Find this as testimony in support of **SB 1520 – Section 12** – which would reset the Higher Education Coordinating Commissions guidelines and protocols for collecting employee staffing data from the Universities and Community Colleges in Oregon.

SEIU and Higher Education faculty and student allies were integral with then Representative Michael Dembrow in the passage of HB 2152 in the 2013 legislative session. It was a product of an in-session stakeholder work group that instructed the 17 Community Colleges; the Oregon University System (OUS) and individual university campuses to report staffing ratios. The ratios are based on the numbers of administrators and supervisory staff in relation to the numbers of front line workers – faculty and staff - and the numbers of students served. Post the breakup of the OUS and the State Board of Higher Education – the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) would be instructed to take over oversight of reports. In terms of these reports - that transition has proven to be bumpy at best.

The goal of the reports was to drill down on the ratios of supervisors to workers to best serve students. The idea is not to penalize institutions or compare them to each other. But to set baselines of data to track annually; help explain expenditures and improve upon practices so that the legislature; Oregon

families; students and the public will be confident in how our Higher Ed institutions are being run and their intrinsic worth as state investments.

For example - the first OUS/Public University released report in December of 2013 found on average that there was 2.9 classified service workers for every (1) supervisor – system wide. The second OUS report – came out in the fall of 2014 and found that there was a slight increase of 3.1 classified service workers for every (1) supervisor.

SEIU 503 supported now Senator Dembrow's efforts to improve on these reports with SB 113 in the 2015 Session. SB 113 proposed to provide a pathway for more coordination in reporting on University and Community College staff, faculty and student numbers and employment data. That passed with bi-partisan support and was moved into a summer workgroup to iron out dates; timelines and reporting mechanisms.

In the more than two years hence final reports on institutional employment data for the academic years 2014-15; 2015-2016 and 2016-17 have been delayed and not finalized by the Universities or the Community Colleges. And from what we can tell - none have been published by HECC nor shared with the Legislature.

SB 1520 – Section 12 is necessary to get the ball rolling on the 2015 workgroup's recommendations for SB 113 and assist the HECC in getting reports out to the Legislature and the Oregon public for their review. Thanks for your support in making these reports happen again.