



HB 4053: Accelerated Learning Study Bill

Letter of Support | February 8, 2018

To Chair Reardon, Vice-Chair Alonso Leon, Vice-Chair Whisnant, and members of the House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development:

My name is Amelia Ernst and I am a junior at Grant High School in Portland, Oregon. I am also the education policy organizer of [Oregon Student Voice \(OSV\)](#), a student-led organization that empowers students to be authentic partners with K-12 education decision makers. I am writing on behalf of OSV in support of HB 4051. This bill requires the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to report on the number of students attempting to transfer accelerated credits and analyze how the credits are accepted. This bill is extremely important for us to begin having a deeper understanding for how accelerated learning courses transfer to college. In the following, I share my experience and those of my peers with accelerated learning opportunities at the high school level.

Since starting high school, I have been encouraged by my teachers, counselors, friends, and family to take accelerated learning courses to prepare myself for postsecondary opportunities and receive college course credit in the process, which will hopefully reduce some higher education expenses. My high school offers many accelerated learning opportunities, including AP classes and dual credit courses through both Portland Community College and Portland State University. While taking these classes provides a great experience for me as a high school student, there is typically a cost ranging from three to six hundred dollars to gain college credit. While this cost is still less than cost of a college course at a four year institution, it is still an extremely high price for me and my high school student peers to pay, but we are encouraged to pay to gain college experience and save money in the future. Even with these high costs, we are told that our credits are not guaranteed to transfer to all universities and we may have to retake and pay for the courses again in the future. In my experiences, these high costs without a guarantee of college credit results in many students choosing not to pursue accelerated learning opportunities in high school because they do not want to pay again for these courses if the university they choose to attend won't accept these credits. However, this choice could hinder students' future potential as they may not be as prepared for higher education courses and may take on a greater cost burden as they pursue a two and/or four year degree.

I, as well as the high school members of Oregon Student Voice, believe that HB 4053 is an important step that will help our education system better understand how accelerated learning courses transfer to college. With knowledge gained from information gathered by HECC, we can begin implementing reforms that will not only better prepare high school students for higher education, but also help students mitigate the cost burden of two and/or four year degrees. We hope that the House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development approves HB 4053.

Thank you for your consideration,

Amelia Ernst
Education Policy Organizer
Oregon Student Voice