

Kate Brown
Governor



Oregon Commission on Hispanic Affairs
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Testimony in Support of SB 1563
February 22, 2018, 3 pm, HR D
House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development

Chair Representative Reardon, Vice Chairs Representative Alonso Leon, and Representative Whisnant, and Representatives Bynum, Clem, Heard, Noble, Reschke, and Sollman:

At the request of the Chairs of the Oregon Advocacy Commissions and as members of the Commission on Hispanic Affairs, we, Jonathan Chávez-Báez and Daniel López-Cevallos, want to take this opportunity to strongly encourage the committee to consider the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 1563, which would eliminate two significant barriers of educational achievement for our noncitizen Oregonian students. We are also submitting this testimony on behalf of the Oregon Commissions on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs, Black Affairs, and Commission for Women, each of which supports SB 1563 as of intersectional importance to their constituent communities.

First, SB 1563 would allow noncitizen students to qualify for in-state tuition at public universities without the requirement to apply for official federal identification documents. We believe this is a sensible solution to allow noncitizen students to move forward with their postsecondary academic pursuits, regardless of the immigration policy environment at the federal level.

Second, SB 1563 would allow public universities, including Oregon Health and Science University and community colleges, to provide scholarships and other forms of financial aid to noncitizen students. We acknowledge the value of existing policy allowing noncitizen students who, when meeting certain requirements, qualify for in-state tuition. However, what we are hearing from community leaders, parents and students, is that despite this benefit, there are still considerable gaps in the financing of their college education. With SB 1563, universities will be allowed to offer more robust financial aid packages to noncitizen students, who are likely to come from first-generation college-going, low-income, racial/ethnic minority background families. We believe this is a step in the right direction towards fulfilling our 40-40-20 statewide educational goal.

OR Commission on Hispanic Affairs

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Ultimately, SB 1563 will address equity issues in the postsecondary educational attainment of Oregon youth, and ensure that the next generation of Oregonian workers are given an equal opportunity to further their educational and, in turn, economic prospects, to the benefit of themselves, their families, their communities, and the state of Oregon as a whole.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Chávez-Báez
Commission on Hispanic Affairs



Daniel López-Cevallos
Commission on Hispanic Affairs



Chanpone Sinlapasai, Chair,
Oregon Commission on Asian and Pacific
Islander Affairs



James Morris, Chair
Oregon Commission on Black Affairs



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Oregon Commission for Women