

**SB 1557 B STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**Carrier:** Rep. Alonso Leon

**House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development**

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**Action Date:** 02/22/18

**Action:** Do pass with amendments to the A-Eng bill. (Printed B-Eng.)

**Vote:** 9-0-0-0

**Yeas:** 9 - Alonso Leon, Bynum, Clem, Heard, Noble, Reardon, Reschke, Sollman, Whisnant

**Fiscal:** Has minimal fiscal impact

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

**Prepared By:** Laura Kentnesse, LPRO Analyst

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Allows students at community colleges, public universities, or Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) who are ordered to active duty for 30 days or fewer to complete missing assignments or exams in accordance with policies and practices for excused absences, allows teachers to award grades without requiring students to complete assignments or exams, and prevents missed assignments or exams that are completed after the student's return from adversely impacting the student's grades. Allows the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to adopt rules relating to scholarships and grants funded by the Office of Student Access and Completion. Applies to students ordered to active duty after the beginning of the 2018-2019 academic year. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- Higher education continuity challenges and uncertainties faced by Oregon National Guard members called up to active duty for 30 days or fewer
- Current adverse impacts of military service on student status, grades, and finances
- Tuition and fee responsibilities
- Authority over scholarships and grants administered by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission and by postsecondary institutions

**EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

Clarifies that the Higher Education Coordinating Commission may adopt rules for the administration of scholarships and grants that are funded by the Office of Student Access and Completion.

**BACKGROUND:**

In 2005, the legislature enacted protections for higher education students ordered to active duty for more than 30 days. Under ORS 341.499, student members of the military ordered to federal or state active duty for more than 30 consecutive days have the following rights: (1) to withdraw from a course without receiving a failing or incomplete grade or altered grade point average; to receive an incomplete grade, and upon release from active duty, complete the course; or to continue and complete the course for full credit with missed course sessions counted as excused absences, without adverse impact to course grade or rank, and with a grade awarded only if the student completes sufficient work and demonstrates sufficient progress to justify the grade in the opinion of the course teacher; (2) to credit for all amounts paid for room, board, tuition, and fees; (3) to be readmitted and reenrolled at a community college within one year after active duty release without a redetermination of admission eligibility if the student elects with withdraw from the college; and (4) to the continuation of scholarships and grants awarded before the student was ordered to active duty.

House Bill 1557 B would extend certain rights to students ordered to active duty for 30 or fewer days.