

# **A Conversation about Applied Baccalaureate Degrees**

A blue-tinted illustration of a graduation cap (mortarboard) with a tassel, resting on a rolled-up diploma. The cap is positioned in the upper half of the image, and the diploma is in the lower half. The entire scene is rendered in a light blue, semi-transparent style.

**DEBRA BRAGG  
BRAGG & ASSOCIATES, INC.**

**JANUARY 19, 2017**

# Conversation

- Definitions
- Status in United States
- Lessons from mature states
- Lessons from emerging states
- Framing the problem, policy and politics
- Q&A

# Applied Baccalaureate (AB) is...

“a bachelor’s degree designed to incorporate applied associate courses and degrees once considered as ‘terminal’ or non-baccalaureate level while providing students with higher-order thinking skills and advanced technical knowledge and skills so desired in today’s job market.”

(Townsend, Bragg, & Ruud, 2009)

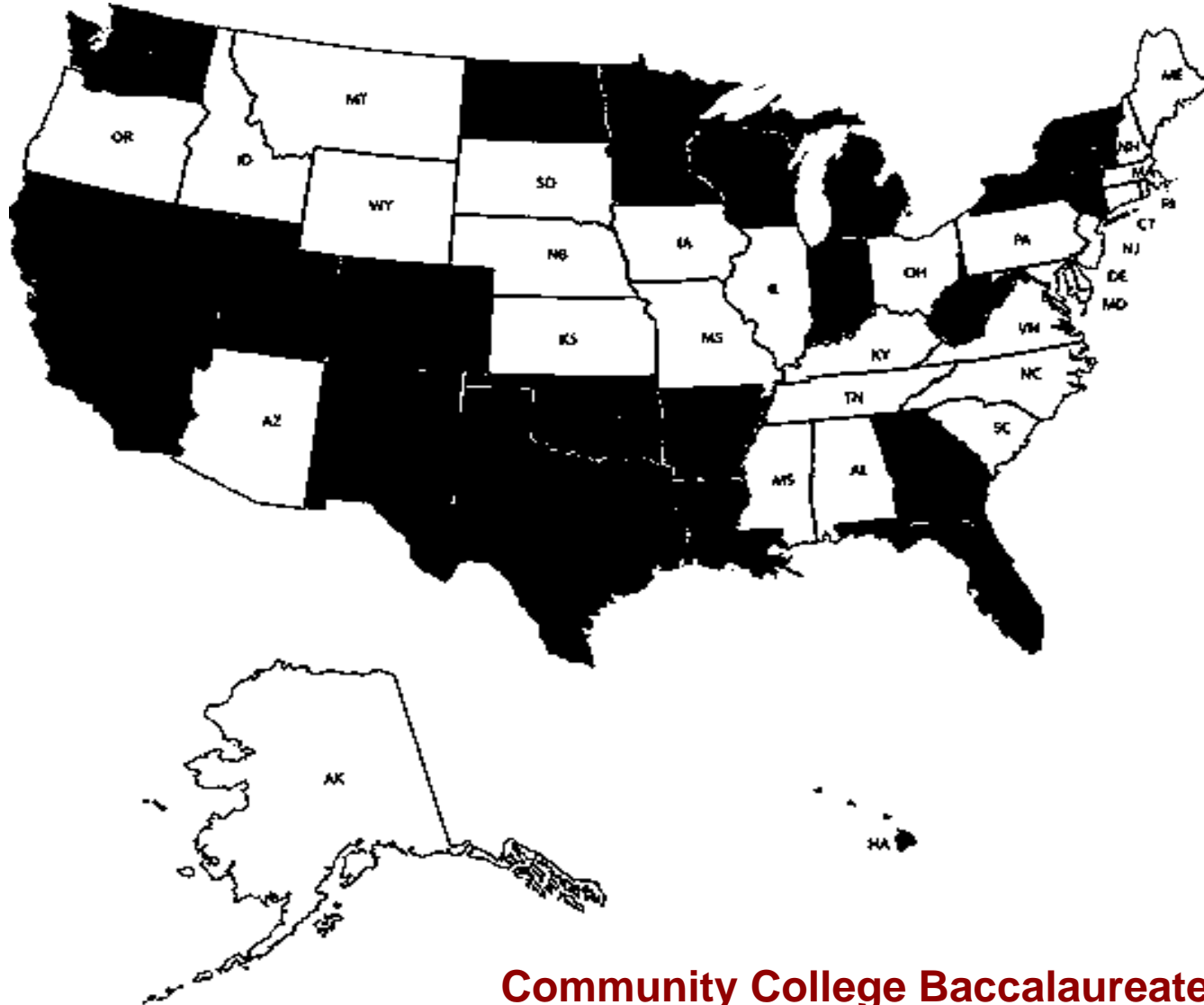
Applied  
Baccalaureate

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graph TD; A[Applied Baccalaureate] --- B(( )); B --- C[University]; B --- D[Community College];
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University

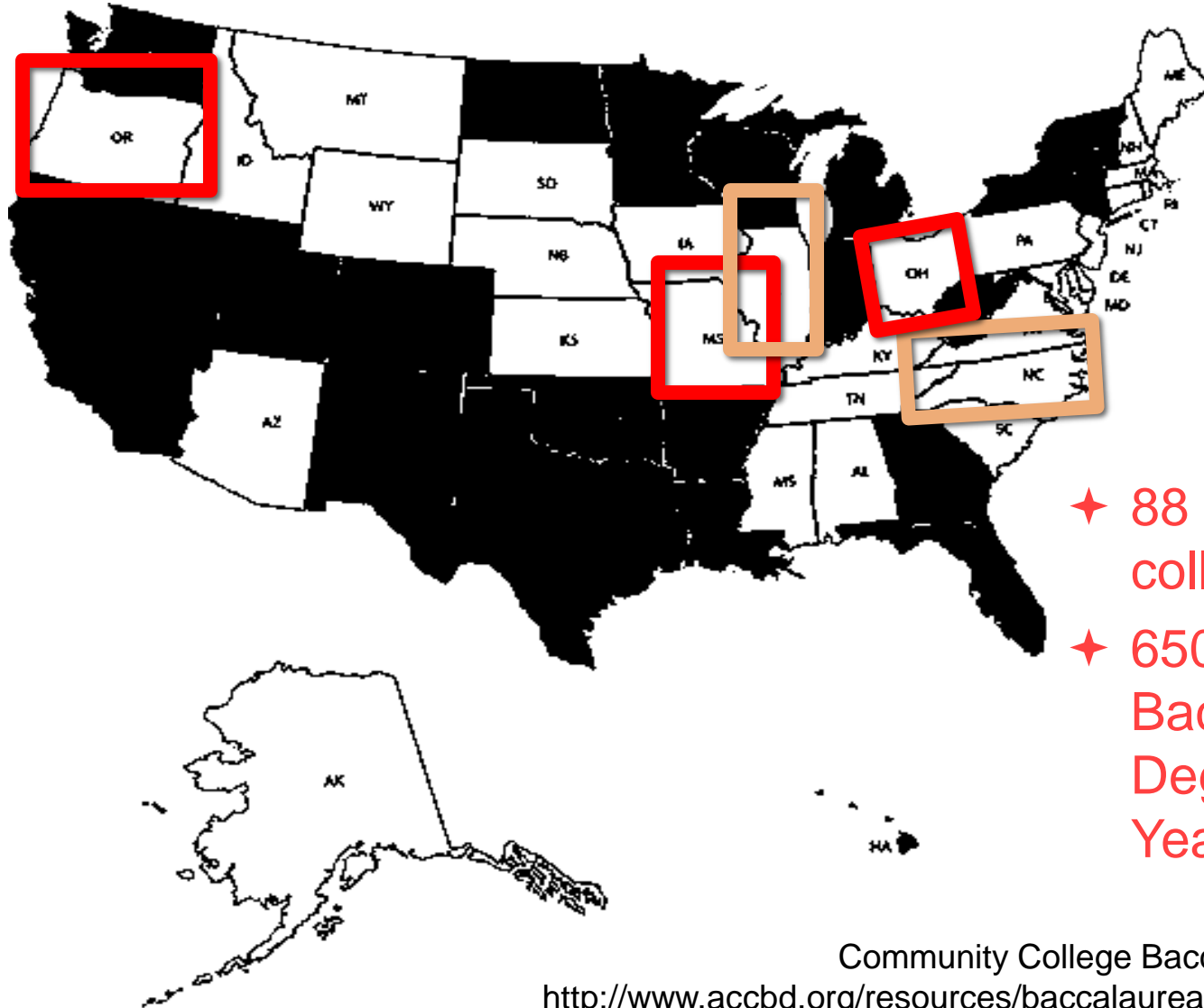
Community  
College

# Applied Baccalaureate Conferral by State



**Community College Baccalaureate Association:**  
<http://www.accbd.org/resources/baccalaureate-conferring-locations/>

# Community College AB Degree Conferral by State



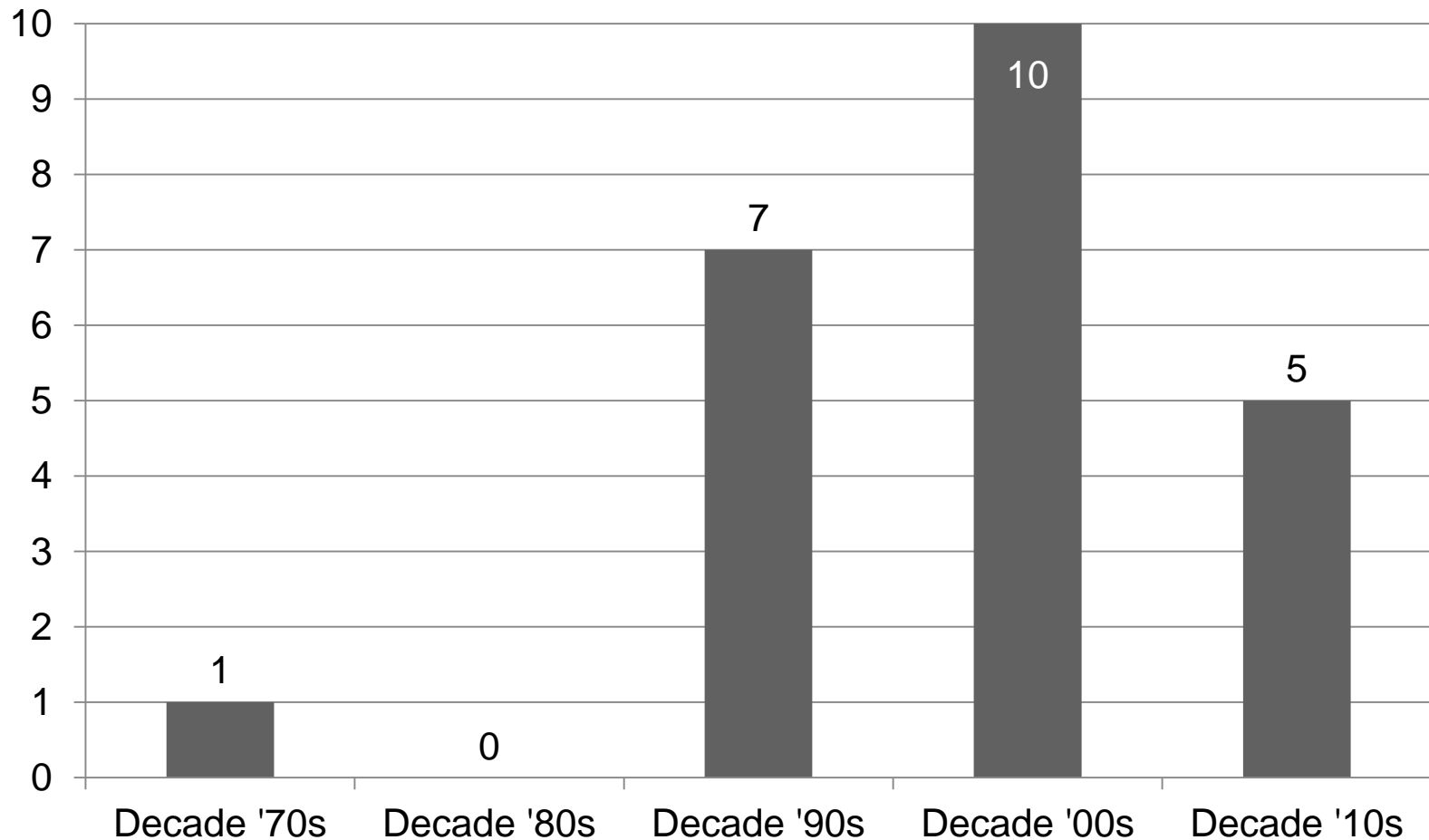
- ◆ 88 community colleges
- ◆ 650 Applied Baccalaureate Degrees / Year

# State Adoption Dates

1. New York	1970	12. Minnesota	2003 *
2. West Virginia	1990	13. New Mexico	2004
3. Utah	1992 *	14. Indiana	2004
4. Vermont	1993	15. Washington	2005
5. Idaho	1995 *	16. Georgia	2005
6. Arkansas	1997 *	17. North Dakota	2006
7. Florida	1997	18. Oklahoma	2006
8. Nevada	1998	19. Wisconsin	2010
9. Louisiana	2001 *	20. Michigan	2012
10. Hawaii	2003	21. Colorado	2014
11. Texas	2003	22. California	2014
		23. Delaware	2016

\*Community colleges have authority to confer the degrees but are not actively doing so.

# Number States Adopting AB Degrees by Community Colleges by Decade





# Maturing States

- Florida
- Washington
- Texas

# Florida

- BAS Task Force (2006)
- Florida College System – Two-year colleges remove “community” and “junior” in names
- Approximately 150 programs “tailored to meet specific local and regional workforce needs”
- Selected Guiding Principles:
  - Students apply for baccalaureate degree-level (to protect open access at entry level)
  - Colleges complete the *Annual Baccalaureate Performance Accountability Report*, including graduate survey and employer survey

# Washington

- 2005 – pilot status (3 community colleges), 2010 regular status, and 2012 State Board approval
- Regional university tuition rate: 2-year (\$4,000 for 3 quarters), 4-year (\$6,000 for 3 quarters)
- Criteria:
  - Employer demand and regional skills gap (program accreditation requirements considered)
  - Unmet need by other providers in region
  - Qualified faculty
  - Curriculum review by similar university program
  - Universities have “right of refusal”

# Washington Growth

- 2016-17: 19 (of 34) colleges - 45 programs
- 2017-18: 27 colleges - 75 programs
- 2015-16: 1,543 FTEs enrolled, 2,155 Headcount enrollees, 474 Completions
- Average 40-50 students per program
- Enrollments are 0.7% of total enrollments in college system

# Washington Program Trends

- Applied Management
- Information Technology
- Nursing
- Dental Hygiene
- Funeral Science Education
- Health professions
- Cyber Security
- Teacher Education/Early Childhood Education
- Natural Resource and Conservation

# Washington Outcomes

- Strong fall to spring retention rates (83%) lead to high completion efficiency
- Colleges vary in the percent of students of color who enroll and complete AB programs
- In all programs, graduates earn more in the year after program completion than associate degree counterparts
- Graduates transfer to other universities for further education

# Texas

- 2003 – State legislation allowing 3 community colleges to confer baccalaureate degrees in up to 5 programs of study. Institutions began enrolling students in 2005
  - Brazosport College – Management of Operation/Production Technicians
  - Midland College – Organizational Management
  - South Texas College – Computer and Information Sciences, Technology Management, Medical and Health Services Management, and Organizational Leadership
- \$500-600K start-up cost per college
- Tuition cost for upper division is 1/2 to 2/3 the cost of state university tuition

# Texas – General Principles

- Meet unmet workforce needs
- The state and students should realize benefits from any new program
- Any policies limiting the scope of community college bachelor's degrees should seek to address concerns such as mission creep and duplication of efforts without unnecessarily limiting benefits such as student access to expanded programs
- Policies should compliment and promote investments in other pathways, particularly university-community college partnerships
- Decisions about policy should consider costs



# Emerging States

- California
- Michigan
- Missouri, Illinois,  
North Carolina, &  
Ohio

# California

- 2015 – 15 districts establish pilots in baccalaureate programs at one of their colleges in a field not offered by CSU or U of C
- Goal: “Assist the state in meeting the need for individuals in high demand technical disciplines which are increasingly requiring baccalaureate degrees and to increase college participation rates and improve workforce training opportunities for local residents who are unable to relocate because of family or work commitments”
- Lower division cost = \$46; upper division cost <\$84

# California Pilots

Antelope Valley College	Airframe Manufacturing Technology
Bakersfield College	Industrial Automation
Crafton Hills College	Emergency Services and Allied Health
Cypress College	Mortuary Science
Feather River College	Equine Industry
West Los Angeles College and Foothill College	Dental Hygiene
MiraCosta College	Bio-manufacturing
Modesta Junior College and Skyline College	Respiratory Care
Rio Honda College	Automotive Technology
San Diego Mesa College	Health Information Management
Santa Ana College	Occupational Studies
Santa Monica College	Interaction Design
Shasta College	Health Information Management

# Michigan

- 2004 – Community college baccalaureate conversation began
- 2012 – State legislature passed authorizing bill for:
  - Marine Technology
  - Concrete Technology
  - Energy Production
  - Culinary Arts
  - Nursing (initially included then dropped)
- No state funding for community colleges to pilot or implement programs
- Differential tuition by program areas but set no lower and upper tuition

# Illinois, Missouri, North Carolina & Ohio

- State legislation drafted and hearings occurring now
- Re-setting the college degree equilibrium – “quid pro quo”
- Focus on specific programs of study, especially Nursing
- Emphasis on demonstrated workforce needs – rigorous program approval processes
- Change in licensure requirements means state adoption for community colleges (Missouri)
- Universities are unresponsive to workforce needs
- Demonstrated partnership between community college and universities

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Research on  
Stakeholder  
Perspectives

Community College

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University

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Employers

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Students

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# Community College



Expands access  
Meets local labor  
market needs  
Serves  
communities

Shifts institutional  
identity  
Increases budget  
woes  
Increases conflict

# University



May help with  
workforce  
shortages

Expand and  
blur mission

Increase  
conflict

Increase cost





# Employers



Serve working  
learners/employees

Prepare for jobs

Improve relationships

Serve communities

Add to confusion  
about degrees

Increase cost



# Students



Make the baccalaureate more “doable”

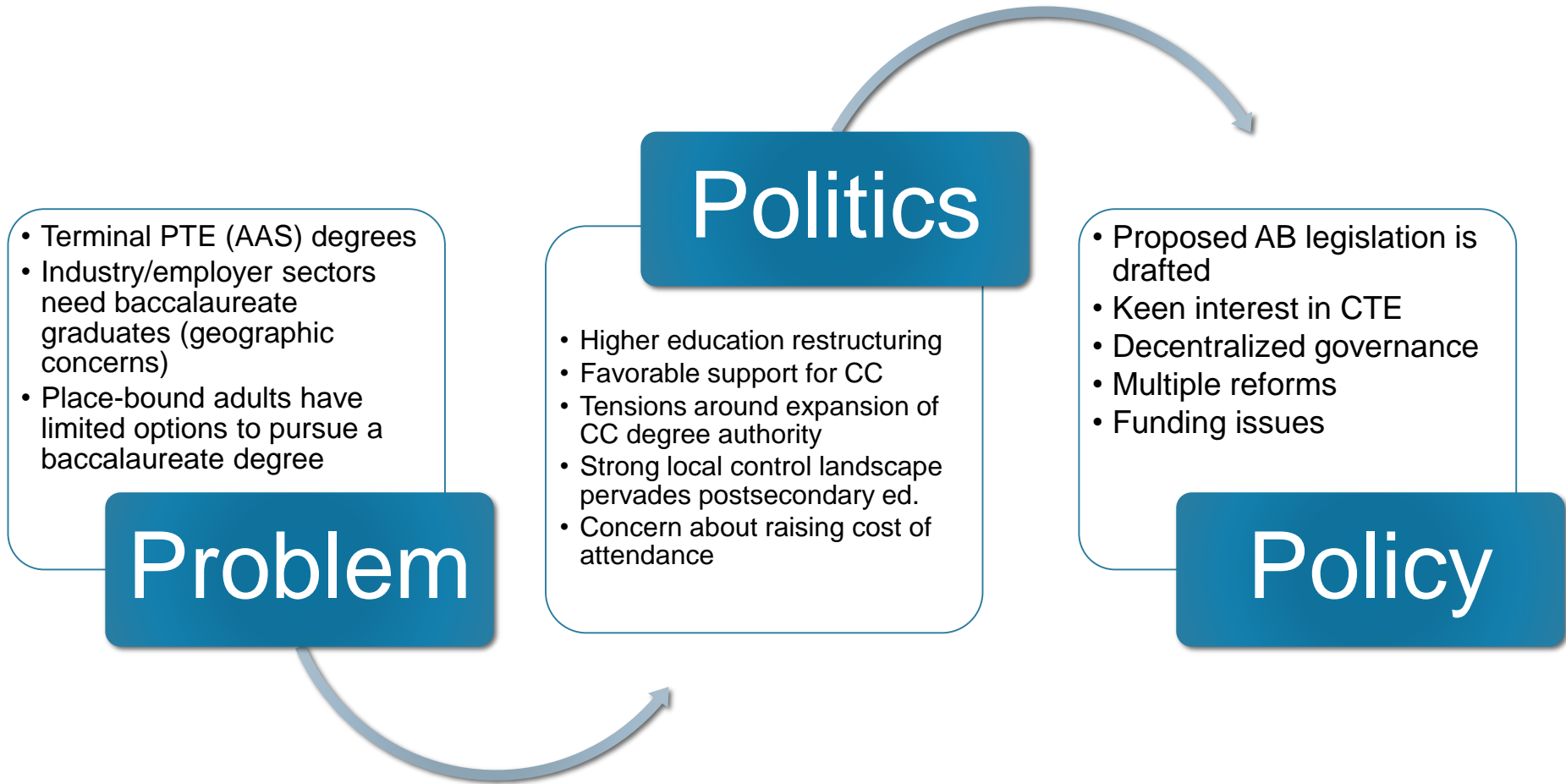
Make college education more work relevant

Worry about credibility

-Will the degree lead to a job?

-Will graduate schools accept?

# Next Step: Oregon Policy Window



**PLEASE ADD!**

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