

Dear Joint Committee On Student Success,

My name is Jeff Shaffer, I'm a lifelong Oregon resident and K-12 advocate in that I am the vice-chair for the North Clackamas School District Bond Oversight Committee, 12-year PTA board member, co-chair a PAC – Community in Support of North Clackamas Schools. But I am also the father an elementary school student, a high school student, a public college student, and I currently work at a community college as an expert in government finance and economics. While I fully support HB 2019 and the funding for K-12 that I've been advocating on behalf of for the majority of my adult life, what prompted me to add a letter as testimony to the Committee is the comment I read below by Co-Chair Barbara Smith Warner in the OPB article on HB 2019 below:

“The goal of this committee’s work has been pre-K to 12 from the start, and that’s because in 1990, when Measure 5 was passed, we had a significant shift in how funding worked,” said committee co-chair Rep. Barbara Smith Warner, D-Portland, referring to the lack of dedicated funding for public schools.

Smith Warner pointed out that colleges and universities can raise tuition and fees when they need more money; public schools can't...

My key point I'd like to share is that it is very short-sighted to think that Measure 5 tax revenue for K-12 schools is more impactful and/or created more impacts to our or community than Measure 5 funding has impacted community colleges. If anything it is the opposite. Both K-12 and community colleges are primarily funded through public, taxpayer dollars, and both are similarly impacted by Measure 5 limitations as large portions of their revenue “pie” are from Measure 5 tax revenue streams. The key difference for community colleges are that they also have a small portion of revenues that are being paid directly by the students (tuition and fees), and most importantly, the populations paying those tuition and fees at community colleges are specifically the most vulnerable populations in the State and those who can least afford any out-of-pocket increases over CPI (inflation).

While K through 12 districts have the flexibility to shift class sizes, schedules, shift instructors between grades, etc, community colleges have no flexibility in how many hours they instruct in a school year as it's set by accreditation, they have no flexibility to merge classes and have one instructor teaching both welding and math. The lack of public funding forces community colleges to either cut wrap-around services for students, or raise tuition to maintain their programs and essentially displace those who can't afford it, or go into huge debt. So while tax revenue impacts have a very clear and real impact to K-12 that we all see through measurable data directly linked to schools. The lack of community college funding not only creates much of that similar stress to staff and students, it also dramatically impacts other areas in our communities, such as increased homelessness, widening the skills gaps in business, and increasing student loan debt.

Again, while I fully support K-12 and HB 2019, I urge you to understand that the impacts from Measure 5 tax revenue limitations that, in turn, impact large, vulnerable populations from lack of taxpayer funding over time is specifically our community colleges. The community college support fund (CCSF) was historically was funded at 4.1% of the State's General Fund revenues in the early 2000s, it's now down to only 2.9%. The current CCSF is \$570 million, and would have been \$791 million if it had it remained at CSL since that time, which, in turn, has caused tuition to nearly double over the last 15 years.

Thank you for your consideration.

Jeff Shaffer