



May 2, 2019

RE: Senate Bill 3

Chair Doherty, Co-Vice Chairs Alonso Leon and Helt, Members of the House Education Committee, my name is Gary D. Will Jr. I am faculty member at Southwestern Oregon Community College (SWOCC) where I teach criminal justice. I would like to provide information about the impact of SB 3 on SWOCC and other community colleges in Oregon especially the rural colleges like SWOCC.

By offering applied bachelor's degrees, Oregon community colleges would be joining 26 other states that currently allow their community colleges to offer some type of bachelor's degree, including all of the states that border Oregon. This will aid our community colleges that are residential like SWOCC and Treasure Valley to compete in recruiting students from our neighboring states.

The most important aspect of SB 3 though is that the degrees that would be offered are not currently being offered by the universities in Oregon. They will also be directed at the needs of the career and technical fields served by the community colleges. As an example, SWOCC would offer the Bachelor of Applied Science in Police Sciences. The degree would be developed in cooperation with the chiefs and sheriffs of our district. The current degrees offered are more general in nature and designed to allow students to continue their education at the graduate level like what Portland State, Western Oregon and Southern Oregon offer or they are degrees that are not designed for police officers such as what the University of Oregon offers.

I have discussed SB 3 with my advisory committee made up of the chiefs and sheriffs. The entire committee were excited and endorsed the need for our college to offer such degree as the current degree programs are not conducive for the chiefs without degrees and their officers from working on a degree. In the criminal justice field, a four year degree has been recommended since 1931 but only two states have made any progress towards that by requiring associate degrees. That is why the chiefs and sheriffs of the south coast have endorsed SB 3.

Thank you for what you do to help Oregonians in furthering their education. I also want to thank you for considering the impacts that SB 3 will have on rural colleges like SWOCC.

Sincerely,

Gary D. Will Jr., MSCJ
Assistant Professor, Criminal Justice