

SB 958 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

Action Date: 04/08/19

Action: Do pass with amendments. Refer to Ways and Means by prior reference. (Printed A-Eng).

Vote: 4-1-0-0

Yeas: 4 - Gelser, Hass, Heard, Wagner

Nays: 1 - Thomsen

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/20, 4/8

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Establishes the Dreamers Access Program to provide state-funded loans to students who attend Oregon public universities or Oregon Health and Science University, and who are exempt from paying nonresident tuition and fees under ORS 352.287. Establishes application, eligibility, and loan requirements. Establishes maximum loan amount for undergraduate and graduate students, as specified. Directs Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to establish interest rates, as specified. Establishes Dreamers Access Program Fund to receive loan repayments, state appropriations, and funds from other sources. Establishes tracking, recording, and reporting requirements. Requires program meet the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act and other applicable laws. Directs HECC to establish application, eligibility, and loan requirements by rule. Permits HECC to submit loan defaults to collections unit of the Department of Revenue and report them to consumer reporting agency. Requires HECC to provide a biennial report to Legislative Assembly, starting no later than December 1, 2022. Establishes report requirements. Authorizes HECC to adopt rules. First applies to loans for the 2020-2021 academic year. Takes effect 91st day following adjournment sine die.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- History of Oregon's tuition equity laws
- College retention rates for undocumented students
- Access to loan programs for undocumented students
- Social security numbers and credit reporting
- Eligibility for federal financial aid
- Equality of college access
- Loan default rates for undocumented population
- Financial hardships of undocumented college students
- Accountability for loan repayment
- Self-supporting loan program
- Administration and structure of loan program

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

Replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

In 2013, the legislature passed House Bill 2782, which permits undergraduate students who are not citizens or lawful permanent residents to pay in-state tuition and fees at Oregon public universities. The legislation is commonly referred to as "tuition equity." To qualify, a student must attend an Oregon elementary or high school for three years immediately prior to graduating or leaving school without a diploma, attend an elementary or high school in the United States or territory five years immediately prior to graduating or leaving school without a

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diploma, earn an Oregon high school diploma or equivalent credential, and demonstrate intent to become a U.S. citizen or lawful permanent resident. HECC reports that in 2017-2018, approximately 250 undergraduate students qualified for in-state tuition and fees under the "tuition equity" statute. Students who are not U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents are not eligible for federal student loan programs. Senate Bill 958 A creates a state loan program for Oregon students who are not U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents and who meet statutory requirements for in-state tuition.