

February 4, 2020

Senate Education Committee
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Senate Bill 1544 – Opposition

Chair Wagner and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mary Yonker and I am the Director of Financial Aid at Concorde Career College in Portland. Thank you for your time in reviewing my testimony.

On behalf of Concorde, I am testifying in opposition to Senate Bill 1544. I have been an employee of Concorde Career College for 11 years and as well as seeing many students graduate and get meaningful jobs, I have personally had family members and friends attend, graduate, and find fulfilling careers thanks to the training received at Concorde.

If Senate Bill 1544 were to pass, I believe Concorde would not be able to stay open and we could no longer help these students. In addition, all of the employees of Concorde would no longer have jobs. As the sole provider in my home and I know that my coworkers cannot afford to lose theirs either.

As I stated earlier, my own family members have attended Concorde. As the parent of 3 adult children who each attended various types of college, I can attest to the fact that Concorde offers an education to those who prefer career training over traditional education. My daughter, Kimberly, is a successful, independent woman with a meaningful career as a Dental Assistant thanks to the education she received at Concorde. I believe that we must have these opportunities available to non-traditional students seeking careers that schools like Concorde offer. It would be simply wrong to take these options away.

I went to a private college straight out of high school and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration. I am glad I received my degree right after high school but I wish I had known more about career schools so I could focus my education on a specific career instead of a general education in business. Through my years at Concorde I have seen what kind of job and pay our students receive and if I had graduated from a career school right after high school, I would probably be making a lot of money now after all of these years.

Again, I oppose SB 1544 as written. I am thankful and proud to be a part of Concorde and I believe what Concorde offers to the community is of great value and would have a very

negative impact on many people if the school was no longer in business. Thank you again for listening to my concerns.

Sincerely,

Mary Yonker
Director of Financial Aid
Concorde Career College-Portland, Oregon