

**FISCAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

**Measure: HB 4137**

80th Oregon Legislative Assembly – 2020 Regular Session  
Legislative Fiscal Office

*Only Impacts on Original or Engrossed  
Versions are Considered Official*

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**Measure Description:**

Authorizes all public universities in Oregon to offer doctoral degrees, subject to approval by Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

**Government Unit(s) Affected:**

Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), Public Universities

**Summary of Fiscal Impact:**

Costs related to the measure are indeterminate at this time - See explanatory analysis.

**Analysis:** This measure would allow all seven of Oregon’s public universities to offer doctoral degrees and limits the four regional and technical public universities to a maximum of five doctoral programs until 2039. In addition, the bill would prohibit the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) and any other state agency from using public moneys to award scholarships, grants, or other types of student financial aid to post-secondary institutions of education that offer primarily online coursework and have been found to have engaged in fraudulent or predatory practices against students of prospective students. Currently, there are no institutions with a physical presence in the state that meet the definition, so no public financial assistance is awarded.

Public universities with governing boards are separate non-state agency entities. Since the Legislature does not approve university budgets or limit expenditures from tuition and other sources, the addition of programs, subject to approval by HECC, does not directly increase budgeted state expenditures and positions. However, the state provides supports for instruction, research, public services, and operation of the seven public universities through General Fund appropriations and state-supported bond authorizations. Institutional operating and capital construction budgets at the regional public universities may be affected by the addition of doctoral programs, and correspondingly, drive future General Fund and capital requests. The budgetary impact will depend on the program added and the faculty and facilities required to implement the new program.

HECC has additional authority to investigate a school’s participation in fraudulent or aggressive practices. The number and complexity of investigation is unknown at this time. HECC anticipates the activities required by the bill can be accomplished with existing resources but may need to return to the Emergency Board if budgeted resources prove insufficient to cover the actual costs of this measure.