



Oregon Community College Association
260 13th Street NE, Salem, OR 97301
Phone: (503) 399-9912
<http://www.occa17.com>

Senate Education Committee
February 8, 2022

SB 1572 -2 Amendment Testimony

Chair Dembrow and members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Karen Smith, and I am the Senior Policy Advisor and General Counsel for the Oregon Community College Association.

Oregon community colleges are supportive of the provision in the -2 amendments that make it clear that colleges and universities must provide information and assist faculty members who teach at our institutions with applying for the federal Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program. We believe all eligible employees should have access to this information and we currently assist all faculty members and other college employees with the forms needed to apply for loan forgiveness. The program eligibility requirements are set by the U.S. Department of Education.

We are concerned about the addition of a new calculation included in the amendments to define “faculty who teach” with a different formula to determine who teaches full-time and must be notified and assisted with the program application. Prior to the passage of HB 3255 (2021) colleges determined average hours worked based on existing collectively bargained formulas or in some cases PERS full time equivalency standards to determine the number of full-time equivalent hours worked. HB 3255 added a new calculation of 3.35 additional hours for each hour of instruction worked as the formula to use when the employer reports average hours worked per week on the loan forgiveness application. The new formula went into effect on September 25, 2021 and is more generous than the previously used formulas. Adding an additional new calculation for faculty who teach is not necessary and will cause inequities with other college employees who may be eligible for federal loan forgiveness. Further, we believe this will cause confusion with existing college bargained contracts that define full-time and part-time employment status. For part-time faculty, we should be cautious about creating a new standard and definition of what constitutes “full-time teaching” for purposes of reporting hours for loan forgiveness when the employment status by all other standards is “part-time” and must be reported as such by the employer on the loan forgiveness form.

For this reason, we urge you to delete the new language added in subsections 2(a) and (b) from the -2 amendment. Thank you for your consideration.