

FISCAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Measure: HB 2262 - 1

82nd Oregon Legislative Assembly – 2023 Regular Session

Legislative Fiscal Office

Only Impacts on Original or Engrossed Versions are Considered Official

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Measure Description:

Appropriates an unspecified amount of General Fund to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for distribution to community colleges and public universities for the purpose of hiring benefits navigators.

Government Unit(s) Affected:

Higher Education Coordinating Commission, Community Colleges, Public Universities

Summary of Fiscal Impact:

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

Analysis:

House Bill 2262, as amended by the -1 amendments, appropriates an unspecified amount of General Fund to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC), in the 2023-25 biennium, for distribution to community colleges and public universities for the purpose of hiring benefits navigators. The measure takes effect on July 1, 2023.

In 2021, the Legislative Assembly passed House Bill 2835, which requires each community college and public university to employ a benefits navigator for the purpose of assisting students in applying for all state, federal, and other benefits that may be available to the student, including non-education benefits. HB 2835 further established a consortium, housed at Portland Community College, for the purpose of creating a community of practice and reporting on the activities and status of the program. HB 2835 included \$4,999,150 General Fund in ongoing support for this benefits navigator program. The continued funding for this program is included in HECC's 2023-25 current service level budget. The community colleges and public universities have not collated information on the use of these funds and the effectiveness of the benefit navigators. The first report is due on July 1, 2023, and until that report is submitted, there is limited information on what additional resources, if any, would be needed to expand the program.

The measure is anticipated to have an indeterminate fiscal impact to HECC, as the measure appropriates an indeterminate amount of General Fund to HECC, which HECC would disburse as special payments to community colleges and public universities. Depending on the amount of the appropriation, HECC may need to develop a process for determining which community colleges and public universities require additional benefits navigator positions and other resources for program activity associated with benefits navigation. Any increase in workload is anticipated to have a minimal fiscal impact on HECC, as agreements are already in place with community colleges and public universities under HB 2835.

The measure warrants a subsequent referral to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means for further consideration and analysis of its impact to the State's General Fund and HECC's biennial budget.