

SB 272 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Higher Education

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Meeting Dates: 4/18, 5/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires exemption from nonresident tuition and fees for Compact of Free Association (COFA) islanders, refugees, and special immigrant visa (SIV) holders attending Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU). Limits eligibility to COFA islanders, refugees, and SIV holders who have established residency in Oregon and no other U.S. state. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

FISCAL: Fiscal impact issued

REVENUE: No revenue impact

SENATE VOTE: Ayes, 27; Excused, 3

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Alignment with Senate Bill 553 (2021)

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Compact of Free Association (COFA) Act of 1985 established the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), and the Republic of Palau as independent nations, terminating the United States' (U.S.) trusteeship over the former Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (TTPI). The U.S. has separate Compacts of Free Association with each of these three nations that allow citizens of the FSM, the RMI, and Palau to be admitted to the U.S. as nonimmigrants and to live, study, and work in the country indefinitely. FSM, RMI, and Palau citizens admitted to the U.S. are nonimmigrants, do not receive visas, and are not lawful permanent residents ('Green Card holders'), unless they choose to apply for that status.

In 2021, Senate Bill 553 required public universities to grant in-state tuition to COFA islanders, refugees, and SIV holders who have residency in Oregon, and permitted Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) to grant in-state tuition to these students. As of August 29, 2022, [OHSU policy 02-10-010](#) classifies a person who is a refugee, special immigrant visa holder, or COFA Islander, and who has not previously established residence in a state or territory other than Oregon, as an Oregon resident for tuition purposes.

Senate Bill 272 aligns requirement that Oregon Health and Science University offer in-state tuition to COFA islanders, refugees, and SIV holders with requirement for public universities.