

A-Engrossed
Senate Bill 979

Ordered by the Senate March 25
Including Senate Amendments dated March 25

Sponsored by COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: The Act tells HECC to study higher learning for people with a disability. The Act declares an emergency and becomes law when the Governor signs it. (Flesch Readability Score: 60.2).

Directs the Higher Education Coordinating Commission to conduct a study on ensuring post-secondary educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Directs the commission to convene an advisory group for purposes of the study. Directs the commission to report to the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2026.

Sunset on January 2, 2027.

Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to a study on post-secondary educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities; and
3 declaring an emergency.

4 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

5 **SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section:**

6 (a) **"Disabilities" includes intellectual and developmental disabilities, physical disabilities,**
7 **conditions that require the use of mobility aids, mental illness, neurodiverse conditions, vi-**
8 **sion impairment, deafness and hearing impairment, acquired brain injuries and acquired**
9 **spinal injuries.**

10 (b) **"Neurodiverse conditions" includes autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder,**
11 **dyslexia, dyscalculia and obsessive-compulsive disorder.**

12 (2) **The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall conduct a study on ensuring**
13 **post-secondary educational opportunities for individuals with disabilities. For purposes of the**
14 **study, the commission shall convene an advisory group and shall consult with the advisory**
15 **group to receive information that would assist the commission in investigating whether**
16 **statutory changes, institutional policy changes or financial investments would improve the**
17 **experience and outcomes of students with disabilities.**

18 (3)(a) **The advisory group convened for the purposes of the study conducted under this**
19 **section must include the executive director of the Higher Education Coordinating Commis-**
20 **sion, or the executive director's designee, and must include the following members to be**
21 **appointed by the executive director:**

22 (A) **One representative of an organization or nonprofit corporation that advocates for**
23 **individuals with disabilities;**

24 (B) **One representative of a statewide organization representing students;**

25 (C) **Two faculty members of community colleges who have experience working with stu-**

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.

1 **dents with disabilities;**

2 **(D) Two faculty members of public universities who have experience working with stu-**
3 **dents with disabilities;**

4 **(E) Two staff members who work in a disability resource center at a community college;**

5 **(F) Two staff members who work in a disability resource center at a public university;**

6 **(G) Two undergraduate students with disabilities who attend a community college;**

7 **(H) Two undergraduate students with disabilities who attend a public university; and**

8 **(I) One graduate student with a disability who attends a public university.**

9 **(b) The commission shall solicit nominations from organizations representing faculty,**
10 **students and community colleges to determine the membership of the advisory group.**

11 **(4) Not later than December 15, 2025, the advisory group shall submit to the commission**
12 **a report on the study conducted under this section.**

13 **(5) The commission shall submit a report in the manner provided by ORS 192.245, and**
14 **may include recommendations for legislation, to the interim committees of the Legislative**
15 **Assembly related to higher education no later than September 15, 2026.**

16 **SECTION 2. Section 1 of this 2025 Act is repealed on January 2, 2027.**

17 **SECTION 3. This 2025 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public**
18 **peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2025 Act takes effect**
19 **on its passage.**

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