

A-Engrossed
Senate Bill 604

Ordered by the Senate March 17
Including Senate Amendments dated March 17

Sponsored by Senator CAMPOS; Representative CHAICHI (Pre-session filed.)

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 creates a program in HECC to provide support for certain students. The Act declares an emergency. The Act becomes law on July 1, 2025. (Flesch Readability Score: 64.6).

Establishes the Strong Start Program within the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for purposes of providing support to first-year and underrepresented students at public universities in this state.

Declares an emergency, effective July 1, 2025.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to the Strong Start Program; and declaring an emergency.

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

4 **SECTION 1. (1) There is established within the Higher Education Coordinating Commis-**
5 **sion the Strong Start Program to provide academic support and comprehensive services for**
6 **first-year and underrepresented students at the public universities listed in ORS 352.002.**

7 **(2) The program established under this section must provide comprehensive services to**
8 **be determined by the commission by rule, including services to assist with community**
9 **building, summer programs, academic programs and wraparound supports.**

10 **(3) The commission shall distribute moneys from the Strong Start Program Fund, es-**
11 **tablished under section 2 of this 2025 Act, to the public universities through a formula that**
12 **ensures equitable allocation of resources based on the number of students in need of support.**
13 **The formula under this subsection shall be based on prior-year fall term first-time students**
14 **who represent targeted populations who are federal Pell Grant eligible, rural, underrepre-**
15 **sented or veterans.**

16 **(4) The commission shall adopt rules to administer this section.**

17 **SECTION 2. (1) There is established in the State Treasury, separate and distinct from the**
18 **General Fund, the Strong Start Program Fund. All moneys in the Strong Start Program**
19 **Fund are continuously appropriated to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission for**
20 **purposes of carrying out section 1 of this 2025 Act.**

21 **(2) The Higher Education Coordinating Commission shall administer the fund established**
22 **under subsection (1) of this section.**

23 **SECTION 3. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-**
24 **ated to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, for the biennium beginning July 1,**
25 **2025, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$_____ which shall be transferred to the**
26 **Strong Start Program Fund to carry out section 1 of this 2025 Act.**

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 **SECTION 4.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-
2 ated to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, for the biennium beginning July 1,
3 2025, out of the General Fund, the amount of \$700,000 to be distributed to each of the public
4 universities listed in ORS 352.002, with each public university receiving \$100,000, for purposes
5 of staffing and administration of the program established under section 1 of this 2025 Act.

6 **SECTION 5.** This 2025 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public
7 peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2025 Act takes effect
8 July 1, 2025.
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