

Submitter: Paige Jackson
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB604

Dear Chairperson and Members of the Senate Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 604, which proposes the establishment of the Strong Start Program within the Higher Education Coordinating Commission.

As an advocate for equitable education, I have observed that the transition into higher education presents significant challenges, particularly for underrepresented students. These challenges often lead to lower retention and graduation rates among these populations. By implementing the Strong Start Program, Oregon can proactively offer academic support and comprehensive services tailored to the unique needs of these students, fostering an environment where they can thrive.

The program's focus on early intervention is commendable. Research consistently shows that support during the initial stages of college is pivotal in determining a student's likelihood to persist and complete their degree. By allocating resources to first-year students, the Strong Start Program addresses potential obstacles before they become insurmountable, thereby enhancing student outcomes and contributing to a more educated workforce in our state.

I urge the committee to consider the positive impact that Senate Bill 604 will have on our students and, by extension, the future of Oregon. Implementing the Strong Start Program is a strategic investment in our state's educational system and workforce development.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,
Paige Jackson
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Monmouth, Oregon