

Submitter: Tyler Potter

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB604

My name is Tyler Potter, and I am proud to be an alumni of Western Oregon University. I am writing this to voice my support for the renewal of the Strong Start program designed to help underrepresented students transition into higher education.

Research consistently shows that early intervention programs increase college retention and graduation rates, especially for first-generation students, students of color, and those from low-income backgrounds. The Strong Start program, Specifically the one at Western Oregon University provides crucial resources such as summer bridge programs, academic support, and mentorship—ensuring that more Oregonians can achieve their educational and career goals.

Continued investment in this initiative means investing in Oregon's future. It expands opportunities for students who have historically been left behind, strengthening our workforce, communities, and economy. I urge you to support this initiative and help create a more inclusive and equitable higher education system in our state.