

HB 4124 A -A5 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Prepared By: Kim To, Budget Analyst

Meeting Dates: 2/24, 2/25

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure directs the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to conduct a comprehensive study of Oregon's post-secondary education system and develop recommendations for creating a more coordinated, financially sustainable, and economically aligned institutional framework. The study must include community colleges, regional universities, and research universities, evaluating institutional missions, access across geographic regions, financial viability, and opportunities for collaboration, restructuring, or integration. The study may also examine program duplication, workforce alignment, funding strategies, and affordability metrics. The measure permits HECC to engage third-party contractors to conduct the study. HECC must consult with stakeholders and submit a report with findings and potential legislative changes to the Legislature by December 1, 2026. The bill declares an emergency and takes effect upon passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The -A5 amendment.
- Fiscal impact.
- Public universities' concerns regarding authorizing HECC to review academic programs.

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-A5 The amendment changes the final reporting date to April 1, 2027 from December 1, 2026, and adds a preliminary reporting date of October 1, 2026.

BACKGROUND:

Between 2011 and 2015, three measures—Senate Bill 242 (2011), Senate Bill 270 (2013), and Senate Bill 80 (2015)—fundamentally altered the governance structure for higher education in Oregon by creating the HECC, creating individual governing boards for the state's seven public universities, and abolishing the Oregon University System, respectively.

On January 6, 2026, the HECC adopted a report on [Spending and Efficiency in Oregon Public Universities](#), developed in response to direction from the Joint Committee on Ways and Means. The [budget report](#) for Senate Bill 5525 (2025) outlined the purpose and contents of the report. Previous reports on the governance and landscape of Oregon higher education include the [January 28, 2022 Governance Review of Oregon's Public Universities](#), which conducted listening sessions and produced recommendations, and the [Oregon Higher Education Landscape Study](#), which assessed metrics including educational attainment rates, state demographics and economic conditions, and institutional revenues and expenditures.