

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Education

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 05/12/15

Action: Do Pass The A-Eng Bill And Refer To Ways And Means By Prior Reference.

Meeting Dates: 05/07, 05/12

Vote:

Yeas: 7 - Baertschiger Jr, Beyer, Gelser, Hass, Knopp, Kruse, Roblan

Prepared By: Gretchen Engbring, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to work with public universities to address problem of students who successfully complete two or more years of coursework and leave with no official recognition of academic accomplishments. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Large number of students who do not complete four-year university degree
- Students who drop out early receive no formal recognition for their academic accomplishments
- Inconsistency between degree awarded for two years of work at community college, but no formal recognition for two years of equivalent work completed at university
- Possibility that credentials could improve students' marketability and assist employers in hiring
- Distinct from Reverse Transfer program, which allows students transferring from community college to university to apply university credits to Associate's Degree

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

House Bill 3521 (2011) directed the Joint Boards of Education to develop standards for a process by which a community college would award an associate degree to a student upon completion of necessary credits, regardless of whether the student earned the credits for the degree at a community college or a state university. The HECC studied the issue and submitted a report to the Legislative Assembly in 2012 which included a section on Reverse Transfer Best Practices Identified in Oregon. Among these was "Consider performing degree audits and awarding associate's degrees at four-year institutions."

House Bill 3335-A requires the HECC to work with Oregon's public universities to develop effective solutions to address the problem of students who enrolled and successfully completed two or more years of coursework, but dropped out before graduating.