
Docket Item:

ACTION ITEM: Tuition Equity Report (House Bill 2787, 2013)

Summary:

House Bill 1520 (2013) and the resulting ORS 352.287 direct Oregon's public universities to provide exemption from nonresident tuition and fees for three groups of students, if they meet eligibility criteria:

1. Those who are not citizens or lawful permanent residents of the United States;
2. Those who are financially dependent upon a person who is not a citizen or lawful permanent resident of the United States; and
3. Those who are citizens or lawful permanent residents of the United States and resided outside of Oregon for more than three years while serving in the Armed Forces of the United States and have not reestablished residency in Oregon.

For non-citizens and their dependents, eligibility criteria are:

- High school diploma from an Oregon high school, or high school equivalency completed in Oregon
- Attendance at an Oregon elementary, middle, or high school for each of the three years immediately preceding high school completion
- Attendance at a U.S. elementary, middle, or high school for each of the five years immediately preceding high school completion
- Demonstrated intent to become a lawful permanent resident or citizen of the United States

For veterans who are U.S. citizens and have lived outside of Oregon for more than three years while serving in the U.S. Armed Forces, eligibility criteria are the first three criteria above. The program allows these veterans to pay Oregon resident tuition without having to re-establish Oregon residency.

If eligible for the program, students are allowed the exemption for up to five years from initial enrollment at the university, including transfers to another public university.

The statute further requires an annual report to the Legislature showing (a) the number of students who applied and were accepted into public universities under the provisions of this Legislation and (b) the financial impact on the universities of this program. Initially assigned to the Oregon University System, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission is now responsible for completing this report. The attached report includes these requirements for 2017-18, as well as trend data of the number of students and credits in preceding years. Key findings from the report include:

- The number of students participating in the Tuition Equity Program has risen steadily from 63 students in 2013-14 to a total of 564 students in 2017-18. Both non-citizens and military students experienced similar growth in participation.

- The financial impact of the tuition-equity program on Oregon's seven public universities includes potential benefits from likely increased enrollment and costs from the difference between nonresident and resident tuition. The potential benefit to the institutions from increased enrollment totaled \$3,961,780.84 for all institutions in 2017-18. This measure assumes no tuition-equity student would have enrolled in the public universities if the program were not in place and that all tuition-equity students paid full tuition rates. The potential cost to the institutions is the total difference between resident and nonresident tuition for the credits in which tuition-equity students enrolled. It totaled \$7,742,484.99 in 2017-18.
- Students in the program saved an average of \$13,728 in tuition costs in 2017-18. Undergraduate students saved \$13,921 on average, and graduate students saved \$10,808 on average.

Docket Material:

Attachment: Report, *Tuition Equity at Public Universities: Report to the Legislature on House Bill 2787 (2013)*.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of the report.