

**Docket Item:**

April Legislative Update

*Capitol Climate*

Legislative session continues in modified format, and there are challenges to the smooth flow of business through the legislative chambers, particularly the House of Representatives. As has been an infrequent but growing practice in recent years, the requirement that legislation be read in its entirety prior to a floor vote is being enforced on nearly all legislation in the House as a result of disagreements between the parties over public access to the Capitol, and the desire by the majority party to pass a full legislative agenda. Policy bills that have been passed (many or most without controversy) in committee, and that do not require a referral to Ways and Means, are piling up in the House.

This creates a couple of challenges: First, floor time is a limited resource, and the majority may soon need to make decisions about prioritizing bills that receive floor time in order to ensure the completion of important business. Second, policy bills face a deadline for action in their second chamber of reference, and bills that arrive to the Senate very late in the session may need to be heard and voted on very quickly to meet these requirements. This logjam may soon get much worse, as the deadline for most committees to pass out bills to the floor is Tuesday, April 13, and the week leading to this deadline sees committees pass large volumes of legislation. The disagreements between the parties have led to the odd sights and sounds of a computer-generated voice reading pages of statutory language to a cavernous, vacant chamber.

Republican legislative leaders have promised not to delay consideration of budget bills.

*Budget Processes*

HECC staff have begun presenting to the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education this week, in line with our usual process of walking the subcommittee through the higher education budget. Though there have been schedule modifications, the process itself, with multiple days of invited agency testimony, institutional invited presentations, and general public testimony, is unchanged. Legislators are beginning to hear about the structure of higher education and state higher education goals, and will soon be immersed in detail regarding all HECC programs and offices.

These presentations are being conducted at a time when the Ways and Means chairpersons are beginning to make decisions that will shape the final budget. Staff expect to be informed of the decision to fund current service level appropriations for the Oregon Opportunity Grant, clearing the way for OSAC to issue awards to students at the onset of financial aid packaging season.

Running side-by-side to the traditional state appropriations processes are executive and legislative branch processes to prioritize spending for one time federal resources. HECC has received direct inquiries from legislators regarding increasing financial aid, and is aware of other inquiries related to hiring benefits navigators at institutions.

HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

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*HECC-Sponsored Legislation*

<b>Bill Number</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Status</b>
<i>SB 74</i>	<i>Cosmetology curriculum management</i>	<i>No hearing requested</i>
SB 75	DDPSO scholarships	Passed Senate
<i>SB 76</i>	<i>Transfer</i>	<i>Elements incorporated into SB 233</i>
SB 77	Minor revisions	Passed Senate
<i>SB 78</i>	<i>Placeholder</i>	<i>No hearing requested</i>
HB 2089	Lake County boundary change	Passed House
HB 2090	Boundary change process	Passed House
HB 2091	Lane County boundary change	Passed House
HB 2092	Oregon Youth Employment Program	Passed House Education, Referred to Ways and Means
HB 2093	Financial aid redesign	Awaiting House Education committee vote, anticipated 4/13
<i>HB 2147</i>	<i>Placeholder</i>	<i>No hearing requested</i>

*Italicized items are no longer active bills.*

*Tracked Legislation*

Courtesy of the work session posting deadline, the number of legislative bills we are actively monitoring has decreased to 95, and due to the progression of session a subset of these items have been identified as more impactful and more likely to continue progress. These items are listed below.

Access and Affordability

SB 101 – Modifies the eligibility and aid calculation for the Oregon National Guard Tuition Assistance Program by discounting the award amount only by federal military tuition assistance. This bill is proposed by the Oregon Military Department, and would alter the ONGSTA program by enriching the benefits. Currently the program is last dollar, after all state and federal aid is applied. Under the proposal, the program would only discount federal military tuition assistance. (STATUS: Passed the Senate)

SB 234 – Requires HECC to convene a stakeholder group to evaluate the best manner to establish a coordinated, statewide approach to serving adults in custody who are eligible for the federal Pell grant. (STATUS: Passed Senate Education)

SB 553– Provides the right of in-state tuition for students residing in Oregon under the Compact of Free Association, provided Oregon is their first state of established residency. The GRB dedicates \$4 M to this proposal. (STATUS: Passed Senate Education, referred to Ways and Means)

HB 2412 – Appropriates \$1m each to College Possible, ASPIRE, AVID, BUILD EXITO, and TRIO. The GRB provides \$1 M to each entity as well. HECC has taken a position of support because the bill matches the Governor’s budget. (STATUS: Passed House Education, referred to Ways and Means)

HB 2835 – Requires each institution to have a benefits navigator on staff, to assist students in navigating eligibility and applying for state and federal benefits. (STATUS: Passed House Education, referred to Ways and Means)

HB 3244 – Increases the cap on Oregon Film and Video tax credits from \$14m to \$20m per year. There is concern that these credits will come at the expense of bids for Oregon Opportunity Grant tax credits, as the market is the same. (STATUS: In House Revenue)

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### Consumer Protection

SB 485– Requires student loan servicers operating in Oregon to be licensed by the Department of Consumer and Business Services and provides a complaint and investigations process. Establishes a student loan ombudsman. (STATUS: Passed Senate Labor and Business, referred to Ways and Means)

### Equity

HB 2590 – Establishes a Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education to develop policy proposals to improve outcomes for such students through a process of hearings similar to that used for the Task Force on Student Success for K-12. This bill is Rep. Alonso Leon's follow on to the Task Force on Student Success. The bill represents an important effort to engage populations of students across Oregon and surface policy initiatives that would further the cause of equity, and increase the engagement and success of underrepresented students in our higher education system. (STATUS: Passed House Education, referred to Ways and Means)

### Governance

SB 230 – Authorizes the awarding of professional doctoral degrees at WOU, SOU, and EOU, provided such programs are approved by the Commission. (STATUS: Passed Senate)

SB 712 – Makes the current non-voting Commission positions voting positions at the time the holder of such position is appointed or reappointed. Adds a voting position for a graduate student. The effect is not immediate, as the bill does not take effect until January 2022, and applies only to appointments made after that date. (STATUS: Passed Senate Education)

SB 854 - Makes the current non-voting Commission positions voting positions at the time the holder of such position is appointed or reappointed. Adds a voting position for both a graduate student and a non-faculty staff member. Provides that program eliminations are significant changes triggering Commission review. Makes any public university governing board decision on any issue appealable to the Commission. (STATUS: In Senate Rules)

### Placement

HB 2589 – Requires institutions to allow students to bypass developmental education coursework if the student receives a score of 165 on the GED test. (STATUS: Passed House Education)

### Transfer and Award of Credit

SB 233 – Establishes a state Transfer Council tasked with recommending to the Commission a common course numbering system as well as shepherding future work on the core and major transfer maps. Requires the Commission to adopt future course numbering systems and transfer tools that are based on the recommendations of the Council. (STATUS: Senate Education vote expected 4/12)

### Transparency

HB 2919 – Requires institutions to post information on the materials used in a course for no less than 75% percent of courses. Posting must occur at the time the course registration window opens. Requires the Commission to adopt a list of incidental course materials for which cost notification is not required. (STATUS: Passed House Education committee)

### Workforce

SB 623 – As amended, the bill will require a regular assessment of the workforce system conducted by a third party. The assessment will include programs operated by HECC, local boards, Employment, Human Services, the Commission for the Blind, and Housing and Community Services. (STATUS: Senate Education, vote expected 4/12)

SB 762 – A large bill with multiple components, one of which is to establish a Wildfire Workforce

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Corps, housed in HECC, under an advisory board, for the purpose of making grants to corps programs doing work in the area of wildfire mitigation and recovery. (STATUS: Vote expected in Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery 4/12)

**Staff Recommendation:**

No Commission action is required. This is an informational item.