

**Docket Item:**

June Legislative Update

*State Legislative Update*

The myriad process slowdowns, both caused by party disagreements and modified operations under pandemic-related session protocols, have finally resulted in significant schedule compression, and with just 18 days left before the constitutionally required *sine die* adjournment date, legislative leaders have acknowledged what has been clear for several weeks: there is not enough committee time and floor session time to move the volumes of legislative business that, if provided space on the legislative docket, would likely pass.

However, in just the last few days, we have seen significant movement in the HECC budget, and in the higher education and workforce development policy space. It remains too early to judge the legislative session, but some significant policy and budget items that just yesterday were in doubt are starting to resolve in a positive direction, and the overall volume of postsecondary education policy legislation slated to cross the finish line this year is an increase from the number of significant items passed in the prior long session.

Specifically, the HECC budget is likely to be debated and passed out of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education on Monday, June 14. In terms of major budget items, we continue to expect institutions to receive base funding amounts (“institutional CSL”). It is unclear what the legislative direction on institutional capital requests will be, and to date there has been no back and forth between legislative and HECC staff that indicate a decision-making process is ongoing.

On financial aid, the HECC budget bill will most likely contain CSL level budgets for the OOG and Promise programs, and it is more likely than not the session will end without the passage of equity-oriented reforms to the Oregon Promise contained in House Bill 2093. The discussion on increased financial aid has stalled principally due to the concerns of a small number of legislators that the federal assistance provided to institutions is sufficient to cover financial aid needs. HECC has provided information to the Legislature on the scope of need, and on the use of federal dollars and their insufficiency, but these arguments are yet to break through. HECC and advocates continue to hope and work toward an increase in the Oregon Opportunity Grant in the “Christmas tree” bill that contains last minute budget adjustments and is typically one of the concluding bills in the legislative session.

On the policy side, beginning at the end of last week, a number of higher education and workforce policy bills were scheduled for action. This includes SB 233, which overhauls work on credit transfer and establishes a common course numbering system. It also includes HB 2590, establishing a Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education, a legislative body which looks to emulate the process the K-12 sector underwent in the prior biennium. Finally, HECC’s own leading legislative priority, HB 2092, funding and revamping the Oregon Youth Employment Program to serve underrepresented youth, has been slated for subcommittee action this afternoon.

HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING COMMISSION

June 10, 2021

Docket Item#: 6.1

*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	Signed by the Governor 5/26
<i>SB 76</i>	<i>Transfer</i>	<i>Elements incorporated into SB 233. SB 233 passed Senate Education, Passed JWM Education Subcommittee. Scheduled for JWM Committee 6/11.</i>
SB 77	Minor revisions	Signed by the Governor 5/26
<i>SB 78</i>	<i>Placeholder</i>	<i>No hearing requested</i>
HB 2089	Lake County boundary change	Signed by the Governor 5/21
HB 2090	Boundary change process	Signed by the Governor 5/21
HB 2091	Lane County boundary change	Signed by the Governor 5/21
HB 2092	Oregon Youth Employment Program	Passed House Education, Scheduled for JWM Education Subcommittee 6/10
HB 2093	Financial aid redesign	Passed House Education, Referred to Ways and Means
<i>HB 2147</i>	<i>Placeholder</i>	<i>No hearing requested</i>

*Italicized items are no longer active bills.*

*Tracked Legislation*

The work session deadline for bills that have passed one chamber and have not been referred to an exempt committee is May 28, and bills will continue to move through the committee process until this date.

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: On Governor’s desk. Funding expected in HECC budget)

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: On Governor’s desk. Staff have commenced implementation discussions.)

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. Passed JWM Education Subcommittee. Awaiting JWM Committee action.)

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. Possibility exists for partial funding, potentially as a budget note.)

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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. Passed JWM Education Subcommittee. Awaiting JWM Committee action. Funding expected in HECC budget.)

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: Passed House Revenue, public hearing held in Joint Committee on Tax Expenditures.)

### 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. Scheduled for JWM Education Subcommittee action on 6/10.)

### Governance

SB 230 – Authorizes the awarding of professional doctoral degrees at WOU, SOU, and EOU provided such programs are approved by the Commission. (STATUS: Signed by the Governor 5/26.)

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: Signed by the Governor 5/26.)

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 governing board decision on any issue appealable to the Commission. (STATUS: In Senate Rules. Public hearing held 6/3. Amendments in process.)

### Placement

HB 2589 – Requires institutions to have same developmental educational requirements and placement tests for incoming students who complete high school and are determined to be “college ready” and those who complete a high school equivalency test with a “college ready” score. (STATUS: Signed by the Governor 5/21.)

### Transfer and Award of Credit

SB 233 – Establishes a state Transfer Counsel 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: Passed Senate Education. Passed JWM Education Subcommittee. Scheduled for JWM Committee 6/11. Funding expected in HECC budget.)

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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: Signed by the Governor 6/3.)

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: On the Governor's desk.)

SB 762 – A large bill with multiple components, one of which is to establish a Wildfire Workforce 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: Passed Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery, referred to Ways and Means)

**Staff Recommendation:**

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