



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Higher Education Coordinating Commission

255 Capitol Street NE, Third Floor

Salem, OR 97310

www.oregon.gov/HigherEd

January 20, 2017

The Honorable Arnie Roblan
Oregon Senate
900 Court St NE, S-417
Salem, OR 97301

The Honorable Jeff Reardon
Oregon House of Representatives
900 Court St NE, H-473
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Senator Roblan and Representative Reardon,

This report on Senate Bill 1540 (2016) was unanimously adopted by the Higher Education Coordinating Commission at its monthly meeting on January 12, 2017, following review by the HECC Student Success and Institutional Collaboration Committee on January 11, 2017.

This report and the legislation engendered a robust conversation about how best to achieve its immediate goal: growth in mathematics degree attainment by Oregon public university students. A proposal for a state funded tuition grant program for a particular major is novel and Commissioners voiced varying levels of support for that idea. While some expressed interest in the idea, others felt it was not the best use of funds to achieve the goal in the current budget environment. Although all support the bill's intent, the Commission wished to emphasize the bill's non-tuition recommendations surrounding:

- greater diversity and equity in the major and among the math teaching faculty (Recommendation 3 & 4);
- greater support for the current "Math Pathways" effort in Oregon, a collaboration between the Oregon Department of Education and HECC to better align math curricula between high school and the first two years of college (Recommendation 5);
- a more comprehensive strategy of pedagogical reform at all levels of math instruction to increase successful math course taking by Oregon students (Recommendation 6) in concert with the Math Pathways initiative.



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The Commission and its agency staff are committed to increasing access, affordability, and degree attainment for Oregon students, and we recognize that this bill and its sponsors are committed to the same statewide higher education goals. We look forward to continued collaboration with our partners in the Legislative Assembly as we strive to support higher education and the greater P-20 system.

Sincerely,

Neil Bryant
Chair

Ben Cannon
Executive Director

cc: Senate Education Committee Members
House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee Members
Lisa Gezelter, LPRO Analyst
Laura Kentnese, LPRO Analyst