



Testimony on House Bill 2809
House Education Committee
March 25, 2019

Chair Doherty, Vice-Chairs Alonso Leon and Helt, and members of the Committee. My name is Kyle Thomas and I am the Director of Legislative and Policy Affairs for the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on House Bill 2809.

In 2015, HECC submitted a report to the legislature on competency based education (CBE). CBE is a system of instruction and assessment that relies on students demonstrating progress toward specific skills. This contrasts against the current predominant model that relies on credit hours. In CBE programs, students advance at the speed at which they demonstrate mastery of particular skills.

Since the submission of the report, no action has yet been taken at a statewide level to incent or encourage broader adoption of CBE programming, and the pilot and associated funding would allow an institution or institutions to develop more robust CBE programming.

Currently, several of the main barriers to the development of CBE programs in Oregon are the community college and public university support funds, which base a significant portion of their funding on the completion of student credit hours—a metric which is devalued in CBE programs. Resolving these issues may require adjustments to state funding formulas or robust crosswalks that associate student competencies with credit hours that are reviewed and accepted by the Commission so that institutions can be appropriately funded for CBE students.

Through a small pilot, approaches to resolving these central issues may be identified.

Thank you for your time today.