



**Testimony for the House Committee on Education  
Bill HB-976 (opposition)**

**April 5, 2019**

**To: Chair Representative Margaret Doherty and Members of the House committee on Education:**

Chair Doherty thank you for reviewing my testimony. My name is Kim Ierien, Campus President of Concorde Career College, and a member of the Northwest Career Colleges – Oregon. Concorde Career College (CCC) is a private career college located in Portland. CCC has been serving this community and offering programs in Allied Health since 1966. CCC is a licensed school in Oregon regulated in Oregon and authorized by the Office of Degree Authorization (ODA).

With 40-40-20 focused on graduating high school seniors, the unemployed (and under-employed) adults already past high school were totally left out. Adult Attainment began thinking about solving this void. The goal of doubling the number of credentials (another 300,000) by 2030 will take a concerted effort and needs all sectors of education. Private Career Schools play a huge role in adult education and graduates become employed throughout the state supporting the needs for a specific trade.

At CCC, our students are adult age, and many are single parents who have attempted, without success, other institutional learning. All are trying to change their lives for the better. Some students could not make it through other programs to graduate and start their career if they had to come up with 20% of their tuition out-of-pocket.

I am concerned that HB-2976 will have a significant impact on these students. The legislature is attempting to solve a problem that no longer exists. The violating schools are gone. We are back to the days of Vocational Schools. Our students receive absolutely no state aid – they never have. They rely heavily on Federal Student Financial Aid. The changing of the 90/10 rule would block many students from attending and thus steal their dreams. Additionally, it could put the schools out of business.

Many of the arguments stated are based on stories of veterans' abuse and practices that take advantage of veterans. This could not be further from the truth. At CCC, we have 9 veterans. All are on a pathway to completion. We honor our veterans and enjoy having them in the classroom. They are great role models, serious, focused on completing their degree and getting to work.

As with a lot of students, veterans may have had some challenges getting through a conventional education. In fact, at CCC, 47 % of our students have attended College and failed to complete their College program. Then, they come to us with broken dreams. I am not saying by any means that community colleges are ineffective. Often students just require a different learning environment, additional support, care and understanding. We have dedicated Student Services, dedicated



library personal, tutoring programs, smaller classroom size and fellow students that serve as Lamplighters to assist other students when they need a study buddy for various support.

Please review all the facts, the “real” facts and the “real outcomes” and you will see how the potentially un-intended consequences of this bill could affect this vulnerable population. This initiative has been introduced nationally and has failed at every level. Now, the “emotion” of the bill is before our Education Committee in Oregon to consider the needs of our students. Think “Oregon” . . . we are proud of our “Oregon Private Career” schools and we are proud of our “Veterans.” We do not need HB-2976.

Thank you for your time and consideration in re-thinking the need to pass HB-2976.

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