

**HB 2571 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY**

**Senate Committee On Education**

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**Prepared By:** Tamara Dykeman, LPRO Analyst

**Meeting Dates:** 5/8

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Permits current or former foster child under the age of 25 to receive tuition and fee waivers at institution of higher education if enrolled in courses totaling one or more credit hours for purposes of pursuing an initial undergraduate degree. Applies to tuition and fee waivers granted for the 2019-2020 academic year. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

**EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:**

In 2017, 11,645 children in Oregon spent at least one day in the foster care system. Throughout the year, an average of 7,831 children are in foster care daily, and 830 children in foster care are over the age of 18. The Department of Human Services (DHS) reports that 2,313 youth ages 13-17 were in foster care at some time during 2017. In 2011, the legislature passed House Bill 3471, which provided current and former foster youth under the age of 25 with a tuition and fee waiver. This waiver applies to community colleges, public universities, and the Oregon Health and Science University. To qualify, a current or former foster child must be under the age of 25 and must submit an application for federal financial aid. The recipient is eligible to receive waivers of up to the equivalent of four years of undergraduate education. The amount of the tuition waiver may be reduced by the amount of the student's other state or federal financial aid. During the 2016-2017 school year, 51 Oregon foster youth used the waiver. Of the 51, eight foster youth attended community colleges and 43 attended public universities. Current law requires a recipient to be enrolled in an undergraduate program to qualify for the tuition waiver, but does not define what is considered "enrollment." House Bill 2571 establishes that a current or former foster child must be enrolled for at least one credit hour in an undergraduate program to receive the tuition and fee waiver.