

Dear Oregon State Senators:

I am writing in regards to Oregon State Bill SB1544 that is seeking to disallow veterans to utilize benefits at proprietary schools. I would like to state my disapproval in this bill and that I do not support such a bill. I am a United States Air Force veteran and served for 6yrs, I was deployed to a undisclosed location in the Middle East in support of OIF/OEF and have a 70% service connected disability. I graduated from Concorde Career College in Oct 2013, and I am currently working on my bachelor's degree with a graduation date of Dec. 2020. Concorde has opened many doors for me and was very happy with the education and training I received from Concorde. While I originally wanted to become a paramedic I attended Portland Community College and earned my EMT License and was working on pre-requisites to apply to the paramedic program, during this time I discovered that I enjoyed helping people breath and learned more about respiratory therapy. Even though I had more than enough pre-requisites to apply to a public college, for either paramedic or respiratory therapy, I choose Concorde. The reason why I choose Concorde was it was an accelerated program versus in the public colleges where there are breaks for summer; the next reason was that I didn't have to be on a wait list or wait until a new year to get into the program. I received a great education at Concorde and have been able to get a job anywhere I have wanted, and I would say they are just as equal as their peers coming from a public college. While I know there have been a lot of complaints about proprietary colleges, I can tell you 100% that Concorde is one of the best out there and should not be punished due to shady practices of other proprietary colleges. It is my hope that you still give Veterans the choice of where they choose to go to school, many of us veterans are not traditional students and require non-traditional schooling that works better with our schedules since many are already married, have a family, a job , and many other commitments compared to your typical 18yr old college student. Please reconsider this bill and I request that you vote No, to protect the veteran's ability to choose what educational option will work best for them.

Sincerely

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