



Testimony on Senate Bill 564
Senate Education Committee
March 1, 2021

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Thomsen, 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 SB 564.

On request or at its own initiative, HECC can produce information about how minority students, transfer students, rural students, low income students, and part-time students engage in higher education. This information has helped the legislature, HECC, and institutions form statute and policy, and test that policy for its efficacy in the real world. However, HECC is not currently able to provide the same level of information or analysis for student-parents. Filling this gap is an important step toward developing policy that is responsive to the specific needs of this population, and ensure their success in our system of higher education.

An important differentiation is understanding whether student-parents are active caregivers, as the time, cost, and pressures associated with active caregiving may lead to different experiences for caregivers as compared to student-parents that are not actively in this role. HECC believes the current bill language is sufficient for the agency to design a question to identify this sub-category of students.

Thank you for your time today.