

## HCR 1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

### House Committee On Rules

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**Prepared By:** Melissa Leoni, LPRO Analyst

**Meeting Dates:** 1/24, 1/31

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#### **WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:**

Commends Southern Oregon University on its 150th anniversary and congratulates the university, alumni, and Oregonians on this milestone and its contributions.

*FISCAL: No fiscal impact.*

*REVENUE: No revenue impact*

#### **ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- History of institution
- Southern Oregon connections
- The future of Southern Oregon University

#### **EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:**

No amendment.

#### **BACKGROUND:**

Southern Oregon University (SOU) can trace its beginning to 1869, when local citizens formed the Rogue River Valley Educational Society with the goal of building an academy of higher learning in Ashland, Oregon. In 1872, the first building was completed, and the Ashland Academy officially opened and welcomed its first students.

In 1882, the Legislative Assembly authorized creation of a state normal school in Ashland for teacher training, and the school was renamed Ashland State Normal School. In 1895, the school was renamed the Southern Oregon State Normal School and was located about a mile south of the present campus. In 1925, the City of Ashland donated 24 acres for a new campus, the present site of SOU.

The institution has grown and evolved as a resilient organization with the support of the public over the course of 150 years, including attaining university status in 1997 with an official name change to Southern Oregon University. SOU has prepared future generations of teachers since 1882 and was named the top college for K-12 education degree programs in 2020 by schools.com, based on the United States Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics and the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System.

SOU's School of Business was named best in the Northwest and was ranked 10th in the United States for Master of Business Administration programs in nonprofit management by intelligent.com, based on analysis of regional accreditation statistics in 2019.

SOU advances and encourages the arts within the institution and in the surrounding community, including Professor Angus Bowmer's vision that created the world-renowned Oregon Shakespeare Festival in 1935. SOU has fostered creativity education by hosting the annual international Creativity Conference since 2018.

SOU proudly implements character-driven athletics programs as a foundation for sportsmanship and athletic accomplishments. It has been recognized twice with the Cascade Collegiate Conference Presidents' Cup for Academic Excellence, was first in the fall 2018 LEARFIELD Directors' Cup rankings from the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics, and has achieved multiple conference and national championships.

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SOU has been lauded as one of the most environmentally responsible higher education institutions in the United States and Canada, including recognition as a “Tree Campus USA,” the nation’s first “Bee Campus USA,” and as the nation’s top pollinator-friendly college in the Sierra Club’s “Cool Schools” rankings. SOU has been included in the top 20 list of green colleges and universities by the United States Environmental Protection Agency since 2008 and received the Excellence and Innovation Award for Sustainability and Sustainable Development from the American Association of State Colleges and Universities. SOU also achieved the “Gold” level for sustainability from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education and received a Climate Leadership Award at the Presidential Climate Leadership Summit of the nonprofit organization Second Nature.

For 150 years, dedicated faculty and staff have led the way at SOU, continually renewing the university’s commitment to putting students first by building a community of learners who impact their own lives and the lives of those around them. Graduates of SOU have become leaders in business, government, academia, the military, science, medicine, education, the arts, and every other field of human endeavor. The SOU Board of Trustees received the John W. Nason Award for Board Leadership in 2019-2020.

SOU strives to create an inclusive campus community, resulting in it being named one of the nation’s “Best of the Best” LGBTQIA+ campuses for 10 consecutive years by Campus Pride. SOU also has publicly acknowledged that these successes exist within the ancestral homelands of the Shasta, Takelma, and Latgawa people.

House Concurrent Resolution 1 commemorates the 150th anniversary of SOU and congratulates the university, tens of thousands of SOU alumni, and all Oregonians on this significant public milestone of service, leadership, and contributions to the State of Oregon.