

SB 449 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Bonham

Senate Committee On Education

Action Date: 04/04/23

Action: Do pass.

Vote: 7-0-0-0

Yeas: 7 - Anderson, Dembrow, Frederick, Gelser Blouin, President Wagner, Robinson, Weber

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

Prepared By: Ellen O'Brien, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 3/28, 4/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Extends eligibility for tuition and fee waivers at public institutions of higher education to adopted former foster children. Defines "adopted former foster child" as individual who was in foster care for total of six or more months prior to adoption. First applies expanded eligibility in 2023-2024 academic year. Specifies that eligibility is limited to adopted former foster children adopted on or after January 1, 2012. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Youth choosing between adoption and higher education
- Existing tuition waivers for former foster youth

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Since the passage of House Bill 3471 (2011), public institutions of higher education have been required to waive tuition and fees for current or former foster children under 25 years of age. Under ORS 350.300, tuition and fees are currently waived for current and former foster children as well as current and former homeless youth. A "former foster child" is eligible for a tuition and fee waiver if they were in foster care for at least six months between the ages of 14 and 21 and did not leave foster care prior to age 16. This definition currently denies eligibility to former foster children who were adopted before the age of 16.

Senate Bill 449 extends tuition and fee waivers at public institutions of higher education to adopted children who were in foster care for at least six months prior to adoption.