

TO: House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care  
FROM: Oregon Alliance for Independent Colleges and Universities  
DATE: February 1, 2023  
RE: HB 2977 – request for amendment

The Oregon Alliance of Independent Colleges and Universities (The Alliance) is the voice of Oregon's private, non-profit higher education sector, actively supporting the success of our member colleges and universities, their students, and alumni.

HB 2977 proposes an excellent program to incentivize institutions of higher education to develop training and instructional programs that prepare students to enter the behavioral health workforce. This is a professional area that Oregon must improve upon, and our member institutions want to be a part of this important, targeted effort!

Alliance member colleges and universities offer many behavioral health profession degrees (listed below) and would like the opportunity to join Oregon public colleges and universities in enhanced abilities to offer scholarships or other tuition assistance for students going into the field of behavioral health, develop new pathways to employment opportunities, and build recruitment and outreach efforts to increase the number of students training for and entering into the behavioral health workforce.

Some additional facts about our schools that show why they should be included as an eligible participant for HB 2977 grants:

- Alliance member institutions confer 39.9% of the state's high-demand health profession and related program degrees.
- Private, nonprofit colleges and universities provide 79% of all grant aid directly from the institution.
- Cost of attendance is cut by almost half after institutional aid and public aid are combined and 98.72% of undergraduate students at Alliance member institutions receive institutional aid in the form of grants and scholarships.
- 99.64% of first-generation undergrad students with need attending Alliance member colleges and universities receive financial aid.
- Private, nonprofit institutions have a student population that consists of 30% with a household income that is less than \$25k.
- Alliance member institutions include 16,894 undergraduate students and 7,406 graduate students – totaling 24,300 students - with nearly 45% students of color.

**A simple change** will allow Oregon's private, non-profit institutions to be part of HB 2977 work to expand mental health professional student pathways:

(c) "University" means:

(A) A public university listed in ORS 352.002.

(B) Oregon Health and Science University.

**(C) Is a nonprofit school that is exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and is accredited by a regional accrediting association or its national successor.**

Thank you for your consideration.

**Bushnell University**

Psychology and Counseling  
Clinical Health Counseling  
Forensic Psychology  
Psychology

**Corban University**

Forensic Psychology  
Counseling Psychology  
Clinical Mental Health Counseling

**George Fox University**

Psychology  
Clinical Psychology  
Clinical Mental Health Counseling

**Lewis & Clark College**

Professional Mental Health Counseling

**Linfield University**

Psychology

**Multnomah University**

Psychology  
Counseling

**Pacific University**

Psychology  
Psychological Health & Well Being  
Clinical Psychology  
Applied Psychological Science

**Reed College**

Psychology

**University of Portland**

Psychology

**Warner Pacific University**

Psychology

**Western Seminary**

Counseling

**Willamette University**

Psychology