

HB 4162 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Higher Education

Action Date: 02/13/24

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference.
(Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 8-0-1-0

Yeas: 8 - Bowman, Elmer, Hudson, Lively, Mannix, Ruiz, Sosa, Wright

Exc: 1 - McIntire

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 2/8, 2/13

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to administer a grant program for basic needs programming at public institutions of higher education when sufficient moneys are available. It requires the award amount to be based on the percentage of students at the institution who receive the Oregon Opportunity Grant (OOG). It requires HECC to submit a report on the impact of the grant program to the Legislative Assembly by September 15, 2025. It appropriates \$5 million to fund the grant program. The measure declares an emergency and is effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Competing costs of tuition, fees, textbooks, housing, food, and childcare
- Recommendations from the Joint Task Force on Underrepresented Students in Higher Education
- Impact of benefit navigators and basic needs programs
- Opportunities to develop and scale programs at individual institutions

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

The amendment replaces the measure.

BACKGROUND:

Many students at institutions of higher education face challenges in affording basic needs while receiving their education. In hearings before the House Committee on Higher Education – including an informational hearing on benefits navigators on [January 19, 2023](#); a public hearing for House Bill 3089 (2023) on [February 7, 2023](#); and an informational hearing on student basic needs on [January 11, 2024](#) – students and benefits navigators have reported that Oregon students experience high rates of food and housing insecurity. These students may be eligible for need-based public assistance programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Medicaid. Additional local programs may offer housing assistance, child care, or financial assistance for textbooks.

[House Bill 2835 \(2021\)](#) required each public institution of higher education in Oregon to employ a benefits navigator to assist students in applying for assistance from benefits programs. The original legislation appropriated \$4,999,150 for community colleges and public universities to hire benefits navigators for the 2021-2023 biennium. [House Bill 2262 \(2023\)](#) would have appropriated funds for institutions to hire benefits navigators in the 2023-2025 biennium, while [House Bill 3089 \(2023\)](#) would have provided funding for programs specifically addressing food insecurity on campus.