

HB 3534 -2 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development

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Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 3/25, 4/1

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure modifies the tuition waiver available for dependents of disabled or deceased service members and Purple Heart recipients. It reduces the disability requirement for service members from 100 to 80 percent disabled and expands the waiver to community colleges and registered apprenticeship programs. It allows dependents of Purple Heart recipients to qualify only if Oregon was the service member's home of record at the time of entry into active duty. It raises the age by which a dependent child can apply for the waiver from 23 to 25. It requires institutions to waive fees and the cost of textbooks in addition to tuition and prohibits the amount of the waiver being reduced by specified aid, awards, grants, and scholarships. The measure takes effect on the 91st day after adjournment.

Fiscal impact: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued.

Revenue impact: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Ability to waive cost of textbooks
- Challenges facing service members
- Current population of 500 students at public universities
- Impact on high-cost programs at community colleges

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-2 The amendment raises the age by which a dependent child can apply for the waiver to 31.

BACKGROUND:

The state of Oregon provides tuition waivers for specific student groups, including the children and spouses of military service members who are deceased, disabled, or Purple Heart recipients ([ORS 350.285](#)) and former foster children and former homeless youth ([ORS 350.300](#)). Dependents of deceased or disabled service members and Purple Heart recipients must be Oregon residents, and children must be 23 years old or younger, in order to be eligible. Tuition waivers are available only at Oregon public universities while earning both a baccalaureate degree and a master's degree.

Under current law, these tuition waivers can be "last dollar," meaning they cover the difference between financial aid and the actual cost of tuition for an eligible student. Any tuition and fees remaining after accounting for financial aid are not collected by the institution. If House Bill 3534 were to pass, tuition waivers for the dependents of these service members would become "first dollar," meaning that institutions would waive all tuition and fees and pay out all other financial aid directly to the student.

In the case of this particular tuition waiver, ORS 350.285 allows students to collect the federal [Survivors and Dependents Educational Assistance \(DEA\)](#) without reducing their tuition waiver.