

## HB 2997 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

### House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development

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**Action Date:** 03/20/25

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

**Vote:** 4-3-0-0

**Yeas:** 4 - Fragala, Hudson, McDonald, Munoz

**Nays:** 3 - Harbick, Wright, Yunker

**Fiscal:** Fiscal impact issued

**Revenue:** No revenue impact

**Prepared By:** Ellen O'Brien, LPRO Analyst

**Meeting Dates:** 2/20, 3/20

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#### WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to establish and administer a grant program to expand the scope and reach of college access and success programs. Eligible organizations include nonprofit organizations, community-based organizations, and public institutions of higher education. The measure appropriates \$5 million to HECC to carry out the grant program. It declares an emergency and takes effect on passage.

#### ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Prioritizing funding for systems within schools and community colleges
- Impact of prior funding
- Impact of programs on students

#### EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

The amendment requires HECC to consider whether an eligible organization has a demonstrated history of serving underserved populations, instead of a demonstrated history of serving underrepresented populations. It also appropriates \$5 million to HECC to carry out the grant program. The amendment declares an emergency and modifies the measure to take effect on passage.

#### BACKGROUND:

The 2021-2023 and 2023-2025 legislatively adopted budgets both included a \$5 million appropriation to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to award grants to programs assisting students with access to post-secondary education opportunities. The budget reports for those measures, [House Bill 5006 \(2021\)](#) and [House Bill 5025 \(2023\)](#), note that the appropriations were intended for distribution in amounts of \$1 million to five programs or organizations: Access to Student Assistance Programs in Reach of Everyone (ASPIRE), College Possible, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), BUILD EXITO at Portland State University, and the Oregon TRIO Association.

In 2023 and 2024, the Legislative Assembly considered [House Bill 3120 \(2023\)](#) and [House Bill 4163 \(2024\)](#), which would have required HECC to establish a grant program to award funds for college success and access programs to eligible organizations. House Bill 2997 reintroduces the provisions of those bills.