

Submitter: Andrea Goss  
On Behalf Of: OCCA  
Committee: Senate Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB478  
Senate Education Committee

I am the Vice Chair of the Tillamook Community College Board. I sat through 1 ½ hours of testimony on SB 720 and SB478 Wednesday morning. I was in the Zoom Room, waiting to be called on to testify, but time ran out for the Committee. I had registered through OLIC to testify.

There were many compelling testimonies both for and against the bill. I oppose SB478 for one reason, specifically the mandate to add a voting member to Community College Boards. I believe this bill fails to respect our democratic electoral process which asks community members to vote on their representatives. It also fails to acknowledge existing structures that already ensure student input. I believe this bill is neither necessary nor appropriate. I feel that eroding our democratic election process could be the beginning of a slippery slope for other boards and committees. As many said at the hearing Wednesday morning, I highly value student voices and perspectives, and their input has and will continue to shape my vote on Board issues. At TBCC student voices are not only considered, but integral to our decision-making process.

Although students' input is encouraged, I don't believe that the community wants voting members on the elected governing body for whom they have not had the chance to vote. Students can also run in our democratic elections to have a voting seat on the board. That would be fabulous to witness.

I imagine there are alternative means whereby students can be empowered without undermining the democratic foundation so important to our electoral process, and I encourage the Senate Education Committee to pursue such an alternative.

I don't oppose other parts of SB478, just having a voting member who has not been voted on by the county voters be mandated to be on a Community College Board.

Andrea Goss  
TBCC