

Submitter: Robert Waltenburg

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce  
Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2404

Chair Hudson, Vice-Chair Fragala, Vice-Chair Harbick, members of the committee: My name is Robert Waltenburg and I am the superintendent for Grant County ESD. I sit in a unique position in that I am able to see how certain initiatives impact not just students in one single district, but how that initiative may impact students in five separate districts. The Early College Initiative through Eastern Oregon University is having an impact on students in all five districts and needs to continue. Many of our small, frontier districts do not have the expertise nor the manpower to push forward initiatives that obviously benefit students. This is an initiative that benefits students, giving them the opportunity to explore college-level classes at a much-reduced cost, earn credits toward a degree, and experience college in the safe, supportive confines of high school. Not every student will earn a college degree, nor should every student be expected to attend college, but every student should be given the opportunity to explore college as an option, just as every student should be given the opportunity to experience classes in the trades and CTE.

The EOU Pilot program gives our rural, frontier students the opportunities afforded many urban students. In frontier Oregon we do not have the capacity, nor the manpower, for each and every district to create opportunities within each district. The EOU program allows us to build capacity across the region, giving students the same opportunities afforded urban students.

Thank you for your time and your service.

Robert Waltenburg, Superintendent