

House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development
March 11, 2025

Dear Members of the Committee,

Thank you for inviting me to participate in today's hearing and thank you for your attention to a topic that is of critical, state importance.

My name is Mai Nhia Xiong-Chan. I have the privilege of serving as the Vice President for Enrollment Management, Marketing and Web at University of Portland. The University of Portland, located on the Bluffs of historic North Portland, is committed to the development of the whole person, promoting faith and reason as ways of knowing, teaching ethical reflection, and has been committed for nearly 125 years to preparing people to respond to the needs of the world and its human family. In my division the ability to attract, cultivate and create access to University of Portland is paramount to our institution's mission. It is because of this that I write to show my strong support of HB 2421 with the -3 amendments that would permit Oregon's Direct Admissions program to include private post-secondary institutions that meet the criteria (ORS 348.597 (2)(a)).

By expanding eligibility to include private, post-secondary colleges and universities we ensure that Oregon students can truly find the best fit institution for their academic and professional goals. For example, University of Portland has long held the highest four-year and six year graduation rates in Oregon. And nearly 100% of UP students receive financial aid support. Oregon students should have the option to choose UP or any other eligible Oregon private institution should they find it is the best fit college for them through the direct admissions program. Indeed by increasing the pool of participating institutions we can open the door for underrepresented students to explore a broader range of educational opportunities. And research has shown that more diverse higher education options improve outcomes for marginalized groups. By expanding eligibility in HB 2421 we can put the power of choice into the hands of the students and in doing so we are supporting a more equitable and vibrant future workforce for Oregon.

Sincerely,



Mai Nhia Xiong-Chan, Ed.D.
Vice President for Enrollment Management, Marketing and Web