



Testimony on HB 2553

House Higher Education and Workforce Development Committee
March 18, 2025

Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Fragala and Harbick, and members of the Committee. My name is Kyle Thomas and I am the Director of Legislative and Policy Affairs for the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2553.

In the history of the Oregon Promise, only one student has utilized the deferment option available to them under the provisions this bill seeks to modify and expand.

HECC has consulted with the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to determine how many organizations they have approved under ORS 344.077, thus making student members of those organizations eligible for an Oregon Promise deferment under the bill. ODE reports there are eight such programs.

ODE reports only one of these programs has a service requirement of the type that may obligate a student defer to their Promise eligibility as a condition of serving in the program. As such, students in other qualified programs do not face the same choice.

The result is that that in any given academic year, HECC does not anticipate the expanded deferment eligibility under this bill to result in significant deferment utilization by students, even as the bill provides those students with that ability.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.