STATEMENT REGARDING SB 396

Offered by Dr. Casey Shillam, Executive VP and Provost

Chair Frederick, Vice Chair Weber, and Members of the Senate Committee on Education:

My name is Casey Shillam. I am the Executive Vice President and Provost for Southern Oregon University, and I also serve as the Chair of the Statewide Provost Council. On behalf of Oregon's Public Universities, I am writing to provide additional information about the use of a common application, given your consideration of SB 396.

Five of Oregon's seven public universities currently allow prospective students to apply using the Common App, an online platform where students can create a profile, pick the colleges and universities they'd like to apply to, and submit applications. The Common App is administered by a non-profit organization, and colleges and universities pay extensive fees to be part of the more than 1,000 institutions that students can apply to through the application. While all of our institutions are interested in using the Common App, not all can easily afford the requisite fees in a period of very tight financial conditions for many of our universities.

Each year more than one million students apply to colleges and universities through the Common App. Utilizing existing platforms that are already marketed to students is one way that universities can be accessible to Oregon students while preserving limited state resources. In fact, when we learned about this legislation, it sparked a conversation amongst our chief academic officers to discuss the possibility of group pricing for the Common Application to allow all universities to afford to offer this option to students.

This very week, SOU's Cabinet did approve the use of the Common App-and we plan to implement this next year, for full use in the following academic year.

Thank you for your interest in the use of a common application at Oregon's Public Universities. We share your commitment to Oregon students and will continue to work towards the goal of all using a common application.