



Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Dobson, Vice-Chair McIntire,

My name is Hugh Ady. I'm with Statecraft, a government relations firm representing Better Public Education, a nonprofit association dedicated to improving Oregon's public education system through increased funding, standards that measure progress, and choice that allows students to thrive in the setting that's best for them.

Better Public Education wholeheartedly supports House Bill 2681, which provides general funding for the eight Career Technical Student Organizations registered with the State of Oregon. Those eight CTSOs; DECA, FBLA, FCCLA, Oregon FFA, FNRL, HOSA, and Skills USA, have been invaluable in introducing Oregon students to the world of trades, such as construction, health care, culinary arts, forestry, and more.

The "college or bust" mentality is still prevalent throughout our culture, which is the school of thought that the only way for an individual to attain the type of career success that can result in a good paying job that provides a house and other amenities, is to go to college. This mentality, and this myth, has generated billions of dollars in student debt and anxiety for millions of younger Americans about their career prospects. Recent data indicates that 52% of college graduates are working in jobs that don't require a college degree after graduating from college. The investments contained in House Bill 2681 will introduce students across Oregon to career opportunities that don't require them to accumulate massive student debt to achieve, stable employment, and a good income.

On a personal note, I've seen firsthand the benefit of a career technical student organization. I'm the proud Uncle of four nieces who participated in DECA, with one of them competing at the national level. Their experience in DECA was tremendously rewarding for them. It improved their academic performance at school and encouraged them to seek out career opportunities with a proven return, with two of them entering the nursing field and one of them attending OSU-Cascades to ultimately become a veterinarian.

Better Public Education urges this committee to make the investments in CTSOs that House Bill 2681 provides, and I thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of this important legislation.