

Submitter: Sarah Kester

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB306

I am writing in strong support of Senate Bill 306, which directs the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to study Oregon's higher education system and report its findings to the Legislature by September 15, 2026.

Oregon's higher education landscape is evolving quickly. Students, families, and institutions face real challenges: rising costs, shifting enrollment patterns, widening equity gaps, and a changing labor market. As we consider how to build a stronger, more accessible, and more resilient higher education system, we must begin with a clear understanding of where we are now.

SB 306 offers a responsible and proactive approach. It does not assume the answers but instead calls for a comprehensive, data-informed evaluation that will guide future decision-making. This is not just good governance—it's a necessary first step in addressing long-standing and emerging issues in higher education.

By supporting SB 306, the Legislature demonstrates its commitment to thoughtful, evidence-based policy that puts students and the public interest first.

Thank you for your leadership and your attention to this important issue. I urge your support for SB 306.

Sincerely,

Sarah Kester
Keizer, Oregon