

Submitter:

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On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB306

Senate Bill 306 is a useless waste of time, and you should be ashamed for pushing it. Ordering the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to “study higher education” with a vague report by 2026? This isn’t about improving colleges—it’s a bureaucratic boondoggle that solves nothing. Let’s rip it apart with facts and show why it’s garbage.

This tackles no real problem. HECC’s 2023 report: Oregon’s college completion rate is 62%, above the national 60% (NCES 2022). Tuition’s up 15% since 2019 (HECC data), but enrollment holds at 160,000 (2023). No crisis screams for a “study”—the issues are known: cost and access. Your bill just kicks the can while Oregon’s \$1 billion General Fund shortfall looms (DAS 2025-27 forecast).

It’s a cash drain. HECC’s budget: \$2.5 billion biennially (2023-25), with 30% admin overhead (state audit). This “study” piles on—staff, consultants—for a 2026 report expiring 2027. Meanwhile, 40% of students need aid (HECC 2023), and Promise Grants cover just 25% of need (2022 data). Why fund paper when kids can’t pay tuition? It’s indefensible.

Data’s already here. HECC’s 2021 strategic plan: graduation gaps (20% for low-income, 2023) and 35% faculty shortages (UO 2022 report). Lumina Foundation: Oregon’s on track for 65% degree attainment by 2030. You’re duplicating work—wasting time when 50% of grads stay in-state (HECC 2023). Fix jobs, not reports. It’s a setup for meddling. “Recommendations for legislation”? That’s a green light for rules. Tuition hikes outpace inflation (4% vs. 2.5%, CPI 2023), and 60% of students work (HECC survey)—more red tape won’t help. It’ll burden colleges—UO’s cut 10% of staff since 2020 (budget report)—and students.

Scrap this, Committee. Tackle real issues—aid (30% unmet need, HECC 2023) or workforce (25% jobs unfilled, OED 2022). SB 306 is a distraction Oregon can’t afford. Kill it before it wastes more.