

HB 4124 -1, -3 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Education

Prepared By: Ellen O'Brien, LPRO Analyst

Sub-Referral To: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Meeting Dates: 2/4, 2/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

The measure requires the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) to study Oregon's post-secondary education system and develop recommendations by December 1, 2026. It requires the recommendations to address the purpose of different types of institutions and opportunities for collaboration, restructuring, or integration. It allows the recommendations to address workforce needs, program duplication, employment supports, funding strategies, and metrics of affordability. The measure declares an emergency and takes effect on passage.

Fiscal impact: Revenue impact issued

Revenue impact: No revenue impact

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Timeline for the study
- Academic freedom and faculty governance
- Meaning and types of institutional integration
- Sustainability of the higher education system
- HECC study on spending and efficiency

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 The amendment allows the HECC report to address criteria for reviewing unnecessary program duplication instead of instances of it. It requires HECC to engage the expertise of institutions in addition to consulting with them.

-3 The amendment adds a whereas clause regarding the structure of community college governance.

BACKGROUND:

Between 2011 and 2015, three measures – Senate Bill 242 (2011), Senate Bill 270 (2013), and Senate Bill 80 (2015) – fundamentally altered the governance structure for higher education in Oregon by creating the HECC, creating individual governing boards for the state's seven public universities, and abolishing the Oregon University System, respectively.

On January 6, 2026, HECC adopted a report on [Spending and Efficiency in Oregon Public Universities](#), developed in response to direction from the Joint Committee on Ways and Means. The [budget report](#) for Senate Bill 5525 (2025) outlined the purpose and contents of the report.

Previous reports on the governance and landscape of Oregon higher education include the [January 28, 2022 Governance Review of Oregon's Public Universities](#), which conducted listening sessions and produced recommendations, and the [Oregon Higher Education Landscape Study](#), which assessed

metrics including educational attainment rates, state demographics and economic conditions, and institutional revenues and expenditures.

PRELIMINARY