

HB 4124 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Education

Action Date: 02/11/26

Action: Do pass with amendments and be referred to Ways and Means by prior reference.
(Printed A-Eng.)

Vote: 7-0-1-0

Yeas: 7 - Dobson, Fragala, Harbick, Hudson, McDonald, Rieke Smith, Wright

Exc: 1 - McIntire

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No revenue impact

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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 affordability metrics. The measure declares an emergency, effective on its passage.

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 of spending and efficiency

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

The amendment allows the HECC study to address criteria for reviewing unnecessary program duplication instead of instances of duplication. It requires the HECC to engage the expertise of institutions in addition to consulting with them. It also 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, the 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.