



Representative Michael Dembrow

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House Committee Hears Tuition Equity Bill

HB 2939 would expand eligibility for in-state tuition rates

SALEM – The House Education Committee today heard testimony on the Tuition Equity Bill, which would expand eligibility for in-state tuition rates. In order to qualify under the bill, students must attend an Oregon high school for three years, graduate from an Oregon high school, be admitted to an Oregon University System institution and be in the process of becoming a citizen.

“Tuition equity is not a free pass to college,” said Representative Michael Dembrow (D-NE Portland), who is a Chief sponsor of HB 2939. “The admissions process would still be the same and students would gain admission based on their hard work and academic merit.” The legislation does not affect the admissions process or eligibility status for Federal or state-based financial aid.

Tuition Equity is supported by the presidents of Oregon’s three largest public universities: Portland State University, Oregon State University, and the University of Oregon. PSU President Wim Wiewel testified by phone at the hearing in favor of the legislation.

Also testifying in favor were Senators Frank Morse (R-Albany) and David Nelson (R-Pendleton). The two Republicans join Democrat Dembrow as Chief sponsors of the Tuition Equity Bill, which has bipartisan support.

Ten other states have passed similar legislation, including Texas, California, Nebraska, Washington, New Mexico, Utah, New York, Kansas, Oklahoma and Illinois. Other state legislatures are currently considering similar laws.

“It’s time for Oregon to become the 11th state to pass Tuition Equity and give motivated, hard-working Oregon students equal access to higher education,” said Dembrow.

Dembrow represents House District 45, which includes NE Portland, Maywood Park and the Parkrose area. He sits on the House Committees on Health Care, Human Services, Education and Work Force Development.

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