

2020

END OF SESSION LEGISLATIVE REPORT



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2020 Legislative Session Highlights

Session Overview

The 2020 February Legislative Session ended abruptly after House and Senate Republicans left the Capitol mid-session to protest Democrats' plans to move the climate change "cap and trade" bill, thereby denying a two-thirds majority needed for a quorum to conduct floor session and move bills to passage. Prior to the walk-out, only a few bills and resolutions (unrelated to community colleges) made it through both chambers. It was an unprecedented end to the short legislative session and indicative of the rancor that has built between legislators of both parties.

Community colleges approached the legislative session knowing that there would be little opportunity to fund CTE equipment needs given the other pressing statewide funding priorities related to foster care, homelessness, and housing. OCCA kicked off advocacy efforts with CTE Day on February 5th with informative and interactive displays of college CTE programs from across the state. The day provided community college elected board members, presidents, faculty, and students with the opportunity to meet with their legislative delegations and share information about the efforts of community colleges to address the pressing needs of their students and local communities.

The House and Senate Education Committees held hearings on bills and issues important to community college student success efforts. Credit transfer, student food and housing insecurity, and healthcare for part-time faculty were among the issues being addressed in various pieces of legislation that may have otherwise moved through the process. While none of these bills made it through the process, community colleges had the opportunity to share information about the importance of smooth transfer pathways between K-12, community colleges, and Oregon universities. The Hope Center released its report about student hunger and homelessness in Oregon providing colleges with the opportunity to discuss efforts underway to address these issues on college campuses around the state. College representatives testified in support of Representative Alonso Leon's bill to create a task force related to the challenges faced by underrepresented students in higher education. The bill to transfer North Lake County from Central Oregon Community College to Klamath Community College moved swiftly through the process but failed when session came to a halt.

While the 2020 short session ended with most of the legislation and major issues going unaddressed, community college advocates used the time to lay the groundwork for the budget-setting 2021 Session. Those efforts focused on the community college support fund, CTE ask, and additional funding for student success supports.

(P) = Passed (F) = Failed to Pass

Campus Safety

(F) Possession of Firearms in Public Buildings ([SB 1538](#)) – Authorizes city, county, metropolitan service district, school district, college or university to adopt ordinance or policy limiting or precluding affirmative defense for possession of firearms in public buildings by concealed handgun licensees. This bill was moved to the Senate Rules Committee but was never heard or acted upon. OCCA opposed this bill.

Financial Aid

(F) Exemption from Nonresident Tuition ([HB 4099 A](#)) – Provides that student who legally entered United States under Compact of Free Association treaty between United States and Republic of Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands or Federated States of Micronesia and who has not previously established residence in any state or territory of United States other than Oregon qualifies for exemption from nonresident tuition and fees at public universities and is eligible to receive state and university scholarships or other financial aid. This bill moved from the House Education Committee to the Ways and Means Committee, where it stayed until session closed.

(F) Student Loan Servicers Licensing ([SB 1540 A](#)) – Requires certain persons that service student loans in this state to obtain or renew license. OCCA was neutral on this bill as it included an exemption for community colleges, public, and private universities.

(F) Oregon Promise Eligibility Expansion ([SB 1556 A](#)) – Modifies Oregon Promise program to extend eligibility to certain Oregon foster children who attain their highest level of education while in out-of-state placements. OCCA supported this bill as it represented an equitable result for students who may have been in foster care out-of-state. The bill had a fiscal impact of over \$291,000 for the upcoming biennium yet despite that, moved through the process and had a do pass recommendation. It died when the session adjourned.

Governance

(F) North Lake County Boundary Change ([HB 4056 A](#)) – Approves Proposed and Final Order of Higher Education Coordinating Commission dated December 12, 2019, transferring northernmost portion of Lake County from Central Oregon Community College Service District to Klamath Community College Service District. The bill passed the House and the Senate Education Committee but died at the end of the session.

Operations

(F) Acceptance of US Currency/Hairstyle Discrimination ([HB 4107 A](#)) – Makes unlawful practice for place of public accommodation to refuse to accept United States coins or currency as payment for goods and services. In addition, this bill clarifies the meaning of race to include natural hair, hair texture, hair type and protective hairstyles for purposes of prohibited discrimination under antidiscrimination statutes. This bill passed the House but did not pass in the Senate by the close of session.

Personnel

(F) Part-Time Faculty Health Care ([HB 4146](#)) – Provides that part-time faculty member at public institution of higher education who qualifies for health care benefits will pay 10 percent of insurance premiums for employee coverage. OCCA remained neutral on this bill which would have appropriated \$5.3 million in state general funds to cover the cost of employee health insurance premiums offered through the Oregon Educator Benefit Board (OEBB) for PERS-eligible part-time faculty working mostly at multiple institutions. The bill failed in the full Ways and Means Committee at the end of special session.

Public Contracting

(F) Emergency Preparedness Partner Preference ([HB 4042](#)) – Directs contracting agencies to give preference to bidder or proposer who is certified by Office of Emergency Management as emergency preparedness partner. A public hearing was held on this bill but it failed to move out of the House committee prior to session deadlines.

Student Success

(F) Multiple Measures Assessment ([HB 4128 A](#)) – Prohibits public institution of higher education from requiring student to enroll in course designed to prepare student for enrollment in lower-division collegiate coursework in writing or math unless student was evaluated for placement through specified assessment systems. OCCA initially opposed this bill as it was believed that all Oregon community colleges had implemented multiple measures for placement and the bill was unnecessary legislation. However, upon learning that was not the case for all 17 community colleges, plus the addition of several amendments, that opposition waned. The bill had an indeterminate fiscal impact statement as the universities stated more time was needed to study the issue. The bill moved through the process to the Ways and Means Committee where it died upon adjournment.

(F) Underrepresented Students Task Force ([HB 4160 A](#)) – Establishes Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education. OCCA supported this bill by Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon and participated in several meetings with the representative to discuss the bill. The bill had a miniscule fiscal impact – only \$11,000 to cover per diem and travel costs for legislators on the task force – and appeared it would be sent to the senate chamber. It died at the desk upon adjournment.

Students

(F) Food and Housing Insecurity Study ([HB 4055](#)) – Requires Higher Education Coordinating Commission to conduct study and develop recommendations on how Oregon's community colleges and public universities can best combat food and housing insecurity among their students. OCCA supported this bill as it would be companion work to the recently completed Hope Center survey. HECC had indicated it would need one position to develop a study and analyze the information collected which was the only fiscal impact reported. The bill failed in the full Ways and Means Committee at the end of special session.

(F) Foster Youth Transition Services ([HB 4120 A](#)) – Appropriates moneys to Department of Human Services for transition services for current foster children and former foster children. This legislation ultimately made it to the Ways and Means Committee but did not move make it further in the process.

(F) Student Health Survey ([HB 4132 A](#)) – Requires Oregon Health Authority to administer and collect data from student health surveys. OCCA worked with universities on amendment language to clarify that surveys would apply only to students 18 and under enrolled in K-12 schools. The bill died in the Ways and Means Committee.

(F) Compensation for Intercollegiate Athletes ([SB 1501 A](#)) – Permits students participating in intercollegiate sports to earn compensation for coaching and for use of name, image or likeness and to retain professional representation or athlete agent. OCCA was monitoring this bill as it moved through the legislative process. As drafted, it would not have impacted athletes at community colleges.

Transfer

(F) Transfer Alignment ([SB 1521](#)) – Integrates foundational curricula and unified statewide transfer agreements into Transfer Student Bill of Rights and Responsibilities. OCCA supported this bill as it would further the work of the Oregon Transfer and Articulation Committee (OTAC) on HB 2998 (2017). The bill made it through committee with a do pass recommendation but died upon adjournment of session.

Workforce

(F) Industry-Recognized Apprenticeship Programs ([HB 4143](#)) – Prohibits spending moneys of State of Oregon or of public body on or for benefit of industry-recognized apprenticeship programs. This bill would have prevented state funds to be spent on a parallel apprenticeship program administered by the U.S. Department of Labor and would have retained Oregon's existing apprenticeship program. It failed to move out of the House Rules committee.

(F) Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Board Program Development ([HB 4165 A](#)) – Requires Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Board to establish programs through which grants and loans may be made to enhance and expand workforce development and economic development in Eastern Oregon Border Economic Development Region. The bill passed out of House Rules but failed to move to the House floor prior to the end of session.

(F) Dental Therapist License ([SB 1549](#)) – Directs Oregon Board of Dentistry to issue dental therapist license to qualified applicant. This bill died in committee.