



February 20, 2020
Co-Chair Senator Betsy Johnson
Co-Chair Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
Co-Chair Representative Dan Rayfield
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE, Salem, Oregon

Co-Chairs Senator Johnson, Senator Steiner Hayward, Representative Rayfield,

We are writing in support of SB 1544 which will close the 90/10 loophole in Oregon, and we request that it be referred to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education. By exploiting this loophole, for-profit colleges can improperly count GI Bill benefits as private funds, offsetting the 90 percent cap they otherwise face on their access to federal student aid. We know you have numerous valuable programs and measures before you, and we find this to be consistent with the mission and values held by Oregon Legislature.

The Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC) states that they will need to hire a limited duration Operations and Policy Analyst to assist with implementation at a cost of approximately \$202,000 over a biennium. When testifying at the Senate Committee on Education public hearing for SB 1544, Kyle Thomas, the Director of Legislative and Policy Affairs for HECC, pointed out that “HECC does not view general federal education aid and federal veteran’s education aid as serving different purposes” and that “this bill addresses the different treatment of these two aid sources in federal law by eliminating it in state policy.”

If we hope to ensure that Oregon veterans seeking post-secondary education are protected, we must pass this important regulatory measure that disallows predatory practices among for-profit programs. Furthermore, this measure will ensure ALL Oregonians seeking post-secondary education will be protected from failing schools that would prop themselves up using the 90/10 loophole.

We thank you for your time and hope to see SB 1544 referred to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education soon.

Sincerely,



Senator Lew Frederick



Senator James Manning



Representative Teresa Alonso Leon



Representative Paul Evans



Senator Arnie Roblan



Representative Mark Meek



Representative Courtney Neron



Representative Marty Wilde