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Legislative Administration

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Date: January 29, 2009

To: Senator Peter Courtney, President of the Senate
Representative Dave Hunt, Speaker of the House
Legislative Assembly
Legislative Administration Committee
James Sager, Education and Workforce Policy Advisor
Paul Evan, Veterans Policy Advisor

From: Camille Preus, Commissioner, Department of Community
Colleges and Workforce Development *Cam*

Re: SB 1066 (2008) Veteran Tuition Waivers at Community Colleges

Background

Senate Bill 1066, passed by the 74th Oregon Legislative Assembly – 2008 Special Session, requires a report from the community colleges to the 75th Legislative Assembly.

Section 9 of this legislation requires the Oregon University System to waive tuition for the children, spouse, or unremarried surviving spouse of a service member who, as a member of the Armed Forces of the United State, died on active duty after September 11, 2001; died as a result of a military service connected disability sustained after September 11, 2001; or is 100 percent disabled as the result of a military service connected disability sustained after September 11, 2001.

Section 10 requires each state institution of higher education, each community college, and the Oregon Health and Science University to submit this report no later than February 1, 2009.

Agency Action

The community colleges have had very few requests for tuition waivers. They are committed to helping the families of veterans, but it appears that public knowledge of this benefit is not well known. The Department of Community Colleges and Workforce Development (CCWD) surveyed the 17 community colleges and compiled the information to submit as one report. The total number of tuition waivers provided by all 17 colleges is 49.

There are a range of policies in place at the community colleges, including policies for dependents of currently deployed service members and scholarship endowments specifically for military families. The break-out of the tuition waivers provided is on the pages that follow.

SB 1066 (2008) Veteran Tuition Waivers at Community Colleges

- **Blue Mountain Community College** implemented policies related to service members beginning in 2005. There are three different programs, including, a program for dependents of deployed service members, returning veterans, and family members of fallen soldiers.

Number of tuition waivers provided: 8

- **Central Oregon Community College** implemented a tuition saiver program in the summer of 2008. It has assisted one eligible student in summer term 2008 and three students in fall term 2008. They do not have any additional scholarships or other financial assistance for these students.

Number of tuition waivers provided: 4

- **Chemeketa Community College** began offering the tuition waivers in fall of 2007. The college waives tuition (not covered by any other agency or government sponsored program) of veterans who are identified as disabled 50 percent or more while participating as a result of military service since 9/11/2001 and who listed Oregon as their permanent residence at time of discharge. The college provides free tuition to the dependents (spouse and children) of fallen Oregon military personnel who die while participating in military service since 9/11/2001 and who listed Oregon as their permanent residence at time of death.

One disabled Oregon veteran submitted an application for tuition waiver for Winter Term 2009 and enrolled for 9 credits. One dependent of a Fallen Solder received tuition waiver for one term in spring 2008. No other applications have been submitted.

Number of tuition waivers provided: 2

- **Clackamas Community College**'s "Military Families Scholarship Endowment" is provided by the Clackamas Community College Foundation and is *available* to survivors of service men and women lost in military service since 2003, as well as family members of those currently serving. In this first year, the scholarship recipients are not in the "survivors" category, but rather are "family members" of those presently serving.

Number of tuition waivers requested and provided: 0

- **Clatsop Community College** does not have a tuition waiver policy of this type. To date, they have not had any requests or inquiries regarding such a tuition waiver either.

Number of tuition waivers requested and provided: 0

- **Columbia Gorge Community College** Directors approved the tuition waiver policy on August 8, 2006. The waiver allows dependents of fallen Oregon soldiers the opportunity to earn their first associate degree, and is offered for up to 135 credits or a degree (whichever comes first). Dependents can qualify for a waiver for up to 21 years after the soldier's death, either in Operation Iraqi Freedom or the Afghanistan campaign, or in combat support operations elsewhere. The policy does not include 100 percent disabled veterans.

Number of tuition waivers requested and provided: 0

- **Klamath Community College** has had no requests to grant tuition waivers under the policy.

Number of tuition waivers requested and provided: 0

- **Linn-Benton Community College** implemented the tuition waiver policy in February 2007 for dependents of soldiers who are killed while on active duty. The college considered expanding the waiver to include permanently disabled veterans by Fall Term 2008. The tuition waiver policy is aligned with the OUS policy to help with smooth transition between LBCC and Oregon State University.

Number of tuition waivers requested and provided: 0

- **Lane Community College** reported no tuition waivers for dependents of service members who *died* as a result of active duty since 9/11/2001. The policy does not include 100% disabled veterans.

Number of tuition waivers requested and provided: 0

- **Mt. Hood Community College's** Board of Education approved the veteran tuition waiver program in the spring of 2008 and implemented it in the 2008-09 academic year. The tuition waiver pays for half of a veteran's tuition the first term in attendance at MHCC (fees are not included). It applies to veterans with Chapter 30 benefits and National Guard members with Chapter 1607 benefits.

Number of tuition waivers provided: 33

- **Oregon Coast Community College** has had no requests for the tuition waivers to date. OCCC does not have a Vet Services Office.

Number of tuition waivers requested and provided: 0

- **Portland Community College's** "Fallen Warrior" tuition waiver process approved by the Board in the spring 2008. One dependent received the tuition waiver in the amount of: \$840.00 Fall Term 2008 and \$630.00 Winter Term 2009.

Number of tuition waivers provided: 1

- **Rogue Community College** has a partial tuition waiver for Oregon National Guard members in honor of their service and anticipates late summer or fall to have tuition waivers in place (similar to the legislative bill).

Number of tuition waivers requested and provided: 0

- **Southwestern Oregon Community College's** policy provides up to 18 credits/\$1,116 per term.

Number of tuition waivers requested and provided: 1

- **Tillamook Bay Community College** tuition waiver policy provides free tuition to the dependents (spouse and children as identified by DD Form 93) of those who died in Operation Iraqi Freedom or the Afghanistan Campaign or as part of the Global War on Terrorism.

Number of tuition waivers requested and provided: 0

- **Treasure Valley Community College's** Board passed the Tuition Waiver for Dependents of Fallen Service Members in December 2006. No waivers have been requested or provided to date.

Number of tuition waivers requested and provided: 0

- **Umpqua Community College's** tuition waiver policy was implemented in September 2006, and includes dependents of 100% service connected disabled veterans. The dependents of the veteran must supply the UCC Veterans Office with a Letter from the Department of Veteran Affairs verifying the death or disability rating of the veteran and a copy of the Birth Certificate/Marriage Certificate or DD-93.

Number of tuition waivers requested and provided: 0