



PRESS RELEASE

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House Votes to Create Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education

Under HB 2590, lawmakers would meet with students, professors, and administrators around the state to determine how to make post-secondary education more accessible to underrepresented communities

SALEM, OR – Today, the Oregon House vote to pass HB 2590, a bill that creates the Task Force on Student Success for Underrepresented Students in Higher Education. The task force, which would be comprised of four Representatives and four Senators chosen by each chamber’s respective presiding officer, will be tasked with improving access, retention, and graduation rates for historically underrepresented students in low-income, rural, LGBTQIA+, and BIPOC communities, as well as students who have been in foster care, undocumented students, and students who experience physical, developmental, and learning disabilities.

“This bill presents an opportunity for us as legislators to center students from a wide range of backgrounds in our conversations about how to improve post-secondary education,” said Rep. Teresa Alonso Leon (D-Woodburn), who carried the bill on the House floor. “By engaging with students who have previously been omitted from these conversations, we can create an education system that reflects and works for Oregon’s diverse student body.”

Under HB 2590, the members of the task force will be tasked with visiting Oregon’s public post-secondary institutions to meet with prospective, current, and former students from underrepresented populations, as well as the faculty who support them. The task force is then directed to develop student success policy and funding proposals for the 2023 legislative session.

“Improving Oregon’s post-secondary education system has been a top priority of mine for a long time, and I am grateful that we are looking for creative, inclusive solutions to improve outcomes,” said Rep. Jeff Reardon (D- Happy Valley), one of the bill’s co-sponsors. “I am eagerly awaiting the findings of this task force, and I hope that the legislature will do everything

in our power to enact those suggestions that yield better outcomes for students who have previously been overlooked.”

HB 2590 passed 47-11 and now moves to the Senate for consideration.

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