

MIKE NEARMAN
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 23



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

June 21, 2019

Timothy G. Sekerak
Office of the Chief Clerk

Chief Clerk,

I voted no on HB 5024, the budget bill for the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, which funds Higher Education in Oregon. My no vote was based on two principled objections.

First, most Oregonians do not attend college, and therefore do not get the lifetime benefit of increased wages. I question the morality of having the taxpayers – including many taxpayers who do not have the benefit of a college degree -- subsidize that education. I get it that almost no one can finance their own education. I continue to support a system in which the financing of the education comes from the increased incremental value of the future earnings, by the person who gets the benefit. This could take shape in the form of a “pay it forward” program in which a former student pays, say, 15% of their wage earnings for the next 10 years.

Second, I am privileged to have earned a degree from one of Oregon’s public universities. My experience was that the institution, from top to bottom, was one of the least diverse and least tolerant places on planet earth – and I don’t mean skin color or sexual preference. There was almost no diversity or tolerance of ideas that did not share the politically correct view of the world held by the university. Until this is remedied, I have a hard time demanding that taxpayers – including those whose ideas are not truly welcomed on campus – foot the bill.

Thank you,

State Representative Michael Nearman
House District 23