



06/01/2021

Timothy G. Sekerak

Chief Clerk of the House

State Capitol Building, H271

Salem, OR 97301

RE: Vote Explanation on SB 101

Dear Chief Clerk Sekerak,

I voted 'aye' on Senate Bill 101 because I was assured that the change in grant distribution would not affect our middle class National Guards. However, I have concerns on this front. Grant eligibility and awarded amount will be decided before, and without consideration of, federal Pell grants. From my understanding, Pell grants are not available to middle class folks because they are for those with exceptional financial need. Our middle class service members do not qualify for need based grants, nor can they afford the tuition of higher education out of pocket. While I wholeheartedly support making education affordable for those who seek it, I am concerned about the equity of this formula. Although I voted 'aye' on SB 101, I am concerned about the equity of grant distribution for the middle class.

Another aspect of this legislation that gives me pause is giving the Higher Education Coordinating Commission the ability to change eligibility requirements and grant amounts based on the availability of funding. They say this is to achieve more equitable distribution. I am concerned that the grant program, critical to the education of our guardsmen and women, will be on the front line of budget cuts.

Sincerely,

Representative Maxine Dexter, M.D.

House District 33 (NW Portland and NE Washington County)