



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 97-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

March 23, 2017

To: [Senate Committee on Education](#)
Senator Arnie Roblan, Chair

Re: [SB 395](#) requires HECC to determine number/graduation rates of foster youth at college/university.
[SB 396](#) directs HECC to establish foster youth success centers in each public university.
[SB 551](#) directs HECC to implement pilot program to assist foster youth transitioning from community college to public university. **Support**

The League supports policies, programs, and funding at all levels of the community and government that promote the well-being, encourage the full development, and ensure the safety of all children: this includes use of evidence-based practices in child welfare and foster care. LWVOR believes that governments, at all levels, have a responsibility to oversee and coordinate a comprehensive network of services to maximize student success in school while optimizing available resources.

Statistics show there were a total of 878 youth aged 18 or over served in Oregon's foster care system, and 231 current and former foster care youth received scholarships for higher education for the 2015-16 school year through federal grants. In Oregon, a tuition waiver is available for foster youth and former foster youth who spend at least one year in the foster care system between the ages of 16 and 21. Recipients are required to perform 30 hours of community service each year. This vulnerable at-risk population requires more guidance and transition supports than students with a stable family history. Foster youth have had many adverse childhood experiences (ACES) for which evidence-based practices recommend Trauma Informed Care within education, social welfare and health care services. Youth transitioning out of foster care frequently lack even basic documentations, road maps to the future or supportive adults. These three bills **SB 395, SB 396, and SB 551** address that isolation.

Furthermore, these three bills together: authorize issuance of lottery bonds to finance the cost of developing foster youth success centers in public universities; establish the Foster Youth Success Center Fund; establish the Foster Youth Promise Support Program Fund; and require HECC to coordinate private fundraising efforts. Jointly these efforts are sustainable and a sound financial investment in foster youth.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Handwritten signature of Norman Turrill in black ink.

Norman Turrill
LWVOR President

Handwritten signature of Chris Vogel in black ink.

Chris Vogel
LWVOR Education Policy Coordinator

Cc: [Senator Dembrow](#)