

Testimony of Eric Fruits, Ph.D.
Cascade Policy Institute

Before the
Oregon Senate Committee on Education
May 2, 2023

Support for HB 3068
Award high school diploma if student has passed GED exam

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and committee members:

My name is Eric Fruits. I am an adjunct scholar at Cascade Policy Institute.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 3068.

Under current law, most people under 18 are forbidden from taking the GED exam. In fact, the only way a minor is eligible to take the GED is if they undertake a life-changing decision—such as dropping out of school.

HB 3068 changes that. This bill allows any 11th or 12th grader to take the GED—with parental permission if the person is under 18 years of age.

Under this bill, anyone who passes the GED can graduate early with equivalency diploma.

Earning a GED while still enrolled in school would provide students a low-risk option to receive a diploma, graduate early, and move on to higher education or employment. Under this measure, they can remain enrolled in school and would not have to drop out first before taking the GED exams.

Because HB 3068 allows students who pass the GED to graduate early, the bill would simultaneously increase Oregon’s high school completion rate and reduce the state’s dropout rate.

Academic research shows that individuals who graduate early from high school by taking the GED earn nearly 5% more than those who didn't graduate early—with women showing even more significant income gains.

Because Oregon already has a well-established program in place to administer and oversee GED testing, there should be little to no fiscal impact anticipated with this measure.

Committee members, HB 3068 is a step in the right direction that can help many Oregon students write the first chapter of their own success stories. I hope you support it and pass it out of committee.

Thank you.

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