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## **QuickPoint! – Cascade Policy Institute’s Bill Expanding Access to the GED Exam Is Signed into Law**

**By Kathryn Hickok**

During the 2023 session, the Oregon Legislature passed [Cascade Policy Institute’s bill to ease state-level restrictions on taking the GED](#). Governor Kotek signed HB 3068 into law August 1.

General Educational Development (GED) tests are standardized exams that measure proficiency in science, mathematics, social studies, and language arts. When passed, the GED provides certification that the test-taker meets high school graduate-level academic skills. Higher scores demonstrate college readiness, and even higher scores can qualify students for college credit.

Oregon previously required that a person be 18 years or older to take the GED. The state permitted people as young as 16 to sit for the GED only in limited circumstances, such as if they already had dropped out of high school, were married or emancipated minors, or were in juvenile detention.

HB 3068 removes these restrictions. Cascade’s bill allows 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders (with parents’ permission) to graduate early by passing the GED. Importantly, students won’t have to drop out of high school to take the GED. Earning a GED while still enrolled in school provides students with a low-risk option to graduate early and move on to higher education or employment.

With bipartisan sponsorship and support, Cascade Policy Institute’s GED bill will make a meaningful difference to many students looking for a way to move forward more quickly toward college or a career.

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*Kathryn Hickok is Executive Vice President at Cascade Policy Institute, Oregon’s free market public policy research organization, and Director of Cascade’s Children’s Scholarship Fund-Oregon program.*

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