

Board opposes Measure 2

By Mike Sims
Of the Emerald

MONMOUTH — The future of school financing was a key issue facing the State Board of Higher Education during three days of discussions last week. The meetings culminated in the board's regular monthly gathering here Friday.

At Friday's meeting, held at Western Oregon State College, the board acted on a fear that passage of state Ballot Measure 2 in November would make an already difficult fiscal situation worse. Board members unanimously approved a resolution opposing the 1.5 percent property tax limitation measure.

"It is tragic that many children and teachers begin the school year without knowing how long it will last," the resolution said. "Likewise, the state's financial crisis saps the potential of our higher education institutions to fulfill the expectations of Oregon citizens and to contribute to economic development... Ballot Measure 2 would only make things worse."

The resolution also indicated that the board supports tax reforms that would ensure strong public education from kindergarten through college.

State Higher Education Chancellor Bud Davis said that the resolution was proposed and drafted during a board retreat Wednesday and Thursday at the Hatfield Marine Sciences Center in Newport. Davis said the resolution was proposed in part because of concern with Oregon's current tax structure and because of cut-backs in educational programs and services.

"(The measure) is a threat to adequate funding for education at all levels," Davis said.

The board also approved a staff recommendation to accept a report prepared by consultants on the proposed Budget Allocation System model for financing

higher education in Oregon. Members agreed to adopt staff responses and recommendations relating to the consultants' executive summary.

Board staff will incorporate the recommendations into a final BAS model document, which will be presented to the board at either its October or November meeting.

Two consultants from the universities of Arizona and Texas recently evaluated Oregon's proposed BAS model, and their findings and recommendations, along with Oregon higher education staff responses and recommendations, were submitted to the board for evaluation during the Newport retreat.

The report was unanimously approved by the board committee on finance, administration and physical plant prior to the full board meeting Friday.

The BAS model incorporates a number of variables into its formulas for determining how individual state colleges and universities are to be funded. These variables include faculty

productivity and salaries, classified staff, number of degree programs and student credit hours.

The formulas also take physical characteristics of each school into account, such as square footage and assessed value of buildings and land acreage.

In other action, the board approved the sale of \$3.2 million in bonds to help finance improvements to the EMU and to athletic and recreational facilities at Portland State University and the Oregon Institute of Technology. The bonds will carry a 9-percent interest rate and will mature in the year 2014.

The board also gave final approval to the University's new American Studies bachelor's degree program, which had been conditionally approved by the board in July. The new degree program will be implemented in the fall of 1985.

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