



April 2024

To: House Finance Committee

Re: AAUW Support for HB 1340- Incentives for Post-Secondary Education

Dear Committee Members:

The American Association of University Women (AAUW) is one of the oldest women's organizations in the country, empowering women since 1881. The mission of AAUW is to advance equity for women and girls through research, education and advocacy. More than 700 community leaders are AAUW members in local branches around the state.

AAUW has led the fight for economic empowerment for women, and we have made progress over the years. Yet, girls and young women continue to face barriers to reach their full potential. AAUW advocates for everyone who wishes to pursue a 4-year college degree, as well as those who want to pursue careers in fields requiring less than a 4-year degree. House Bill 1340 will provide incentives for both pathways, ranging from \$250 to \$3,000 in tax credits to graduates of programs ranging from certifications to bachelor's degrees in career fields most in need of skilled workers in today's economy: STEM, education and health care. This bill represents an investment that will pay big rewards, not only for our young women, but for the state as a whole.

AAUW of Colorado urges your YES vote in committee and as the bill moves through the legislative process.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Su Ryden".

Su Ryden

AAUW Colorado Public Policy Co-Director

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American Association of University Women--AAUW is a top-rated 501(c)3 charitable organization whose mission is to advance gender equity for women and girls through research, education, and advocacy.



"Voice of the Western Slope"

"Voice of the Western Slope since 1953"
A coalition of counties, communities, businesses & individuals

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April 22, 2024

Submitted Through the Written Testimony Portal

Chair Representative Marc Snyder

House Finance Committee

Monday at 1:30pm, HCR 0112

Dear Chairman Snyder and Esteemed Committee Members:

My name is Brittany Dixon and I am the Executive Director of Club 20. Since our establishment in 1953, Club 20 has worked tirelessly to serve as the "Voice of the Western Slope" and ensure the voice of our region is not stifled. Club 20 counties are proud to be the home of some of Colorado's leading institutions of higher education including: Colorado Mesa University, Western State Colorado University, Fort Lewis College, Colorado Mountain College, Colorado Northwestern Community College, and Western Colorado Community College.

We come before the committee today and ask for a support vote on HB24-1340.

Higher Education should be accessible, affordable, and available to all Coloradoans. Club 20 supports higher education in Western Colorado to further the economics and general well-being of citizens. Club 20 believes that the State of Colorado should pursue the delivery of educational services and workforce development that enhance our economy. Therefore, Club 20 urges the Colorado General assembly to advance statewide priorities to ensure and promote undergraduate students attending a public institution of higher education in Colorado and are given priority when allocating financial aid dollars.

Communities across our region will be impacted by incentives to Colorado taxpayers for pursuing higher education in our state and is estimated to affect approximately 36,800 Coloradans when fully executed. Club 20 believes this will help keep Coloradans in Colorado for College, making it effective for those students to join the state's workforce and to stay in Colorado, rather than looking for work out of the state. Furthermore, this would create an incentive to complete certificates and degrees that are in demand on the Western Slope.

Our State's high school graduation rates have increased by 23% since 2009, and yet enrollment into Higher Education has declined by 15%. According to reports from the 2023 Talent Pipeline, over 94% of substantially paying jobs in Colorado require a post-secondary education. By aligning educational incentives with workforce needs, we can better prepare our students for successful careers in growing industries.

By endorsing this bill, Club 20 demonstrates its commitment to advocating for the interests of its members and the communities they serve. It provides a platform for Western Colorado's voice to be heard on this critical issue of higher education affordability and accessibility.

Thank you for your time and consideration of support on HB24-1340: Incentives for Post-secondary Education.

Brittany Dixon

Club 20 Executive Director