

February 2, 2016

Dear Senators and Representatives,

On behalf of the College of Western Idaho (CWI) Board of Trustees, I am writing to express our opposition to the recent proposal to amend the community college trustee districts (HB 387). Our primary reason for opposing the bill at this time is that we were not consulted prior to the bill being introduced and did not receive adequate notification to testify at yesterday's hearing. We held a special board meeting yesterday afternoon to review the bill and have several concerns regarding the language and implementation.

The Board of Trustees and the College of Western Idaho has and will continue to remain dedicated to serving all areas within the districts we represent and serve. Our dedication was illustrated in our recent presentations to the House and Senate Education Committees and the Joint Appropriations and Finance Committee. We currently have 14 locations throughout Ada and Canyon County with the largest campus, the Nampa Campus, being developed as the main campus for long-term sustainability.

We offer great diversity in our programs and work very closely with businesses, government entities, and service organizations for each of our communities, both rural and urban. This is evident in the growth of our skilled trades in apprenticeship programs, manufacturing, and healthcare related programs. Additionally, CWI has worked very closely with many of the rural school districts to offer dual credit opportunities. Most recently highlighted in the success of our partnership with Vision Charter School in Caldwell where six high school seniors and one junior will receive nine associate degrees from CWI.

Our goal is to maintain ease of access to education that meets the workforce needs of our entire community. Again, we would appreciate the opportunity to express our concerns and we look forward to hearing from you on this issue that affects so many students.

Warm regards,



Mary Niland
College of Western Idaho Board Chairperson

CC: Governor Butch Otter, Lt. Governor Brad Little, Legislative Representatives districts 8-23, House and Senate Leadership, Office of the State Board of Education, College of Southern Idaho, North Idaho College, and local media.