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March 1, 2013

Honorable Representative Jules Bailey
900 Court St. NE, H-274
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support HB 2516: Outdoor School for Everyone

Dear Representative Bailey,

The Gray Family Foundation is proud of Oregon's long history of valuing and caring for our state's fantastic natural resources and astounding natural beauty. John Gray was active in encouraging public understanding of Oregon's land use laws so that we could protect, manage, and use our lands in ways that provided benefit to all Oregonians.

We are worried, however, that Oregonians are in danger of losing their connection to our natural heritage because Outdoor School is fading away across the state. Today, with kids spending more and more time in front of screens and less time outside, Outdoor School is more important than ever in giving kids the exposure to nature they need in order to be effective citizens. Right now, only about 40% of our children get an Outdoor School experience. We are in danger of losing a 60 year tradition of linking our children with what it means to be an Oregonian.

As a nonprofit foundation that is committed to serving Oregonians, we fear that people will stop treasuring this special place because they won't have grown up with the experience of touching, smelling, listening and learning in the out of doors.

For the health of our children, our state and our industry, I urge you to support Outdoor School for Everyone and pass HB2516.

Sincerely,