



Date: March 28, 2013
To: Senate Education and Workforce Development Committee
From: Kathleen Tom, Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde Tribal Council
Subject: Support Senate Bill 215 with amendments

Chair Hass, Vice Chair Knopp and members of the Senate Education and Workforce Development Committee, my name is Kathleen Tom and I am a member of the Tribal Council with The Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. Thank you very much for the opportunity to come before you today. We are here in support of Senate Bill 215 with amendments, the State Board of Education should not implement a one size fits all solution that impacts the nine individual sovereign tribal governments here in Oregon.

As a Tribe we have made a commitment to dedicate ourselves to building positive government-to-government relationships across all levels of government. We are very proud of the strides we have made over the years, and are equally proud of the State of Oregon and their efforts to build and maintain these relationships. From the work of Governor Victor Atiyeh, various legislative assemblies, the passage of Senate Bill 770, and the current Kitzhaber administration, tribes and the state have worked hard to solidify these relationships. Our strong government-to-government relationships benefit citizens in communities throughout Oregon, and bring with them opportunities to increase awareness of Oregon's unique and diverse sovereign tribal governments.

We believe strongly that this is an issue that is best resolved with efforts from the tribal government and their local communities. We have worked with our own local school districts to make sure they accurately and respectfully portray native culture. We have been able to deal with these situations at the local level, with respect and sensitivity to our tribal students, all students, our tribal citizens and all citizens within our shared communities.

The key to our relationships with all levels of government in the future is through education outreach. We would suggest to the State Board of Education that we move past this issue and on to something that truly could make a difference for the benefit of tribes and Oregonians alike. Let's take a strong look at teaching all of Oregon's students about the history and culture of Oregon's nine unique sovereign governments.

Please support Senate Bill 215 with amendments.