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To: Revenue Committee, 2013 Oregon Legislature

From: Dr. Brian Megert, D.Ed., Special Programs Director, Springfield School District

Date: March 28, 2013

Re: Support for HB 2956

In Springfield School District #19 (SPS), we are in favor of H.B. 2956 regarding Long Term Care and Treatment Education facilities. We believe that supporting students in the area of mental health in our community is vastly important. Specifically, assisting students with their mental health needs through day treatment and residential treatment is becoming more essential. In light of major tragedies associated with individuals with mental illness and the growing prevalence of mental health concerns in our youth, we must financially support Long Term Care and Treatment facilities. While this type of programming is not the only solution, they are an essential component of supporting students with mental health concerns.

By increasing funding to Long Term Care and Treatment (LTCT) residential and day-treatment facilities, summer programs will be expanded, curriculum needs will be addressed, and the number of students served will increase. All of these factors will bolster the overall mental health support for students in our community. In the Springfield School District, we have a long-standing relationship with the treatment facilities in the area and we have witnessed the benefits. We closely partner with them and will continue to do so. We have LTCT program classrooms in our elementary buildings, we attend weekly and monthly meetings with LTCT staff members, and we work with students and families who access programming through LTCT facilities. Again, we understand the impact of these programs and more importantly, understand the benefit of increased funding for LTCT programs.

Springfield School District is deeply committed to LTCT programs in the area. We understand that LTCT programs are not the only solution to addressing mental health needs in our youth, but bolstering the programming through increased funding will help. They are a necessary component to assisting with mental health needs while continuing academic supports simultaneously. Thank you for supporting HB 2956.