

My name is Dr. Steve Schenewerk and I have been the pastor at the Community Baptist Church in Winston, Oregon since 1991. I am a founding member of the Winston Area Community Partnership, currently serving as board president. I serve as a volunteer member of the Build Our Kids Steering Committee, the Winston Education Community Network, and past president of the Winston-Dillard Chamber of Commerce. I also chair the Healthy Start/Healthy Families of Douglas County Advisory Committee. I am here to speak in support of House Bill 2392.

Winston is a core partner of Build Our Kids, a collaborative, evidence-based initiative that has improved youth outcomes in Douglas County communities. Build Our Kids promotes developmental assets through youth-led projects such as Teens Against Drug Abuse or "TADA", "Plant the Promise" drug-free information campaign, more than 200 middle schoolers participating in a tobacco prevention Walk-a-Thon, and the opportunity for youth to present at the International Culinary Experience.

Build Our Kids was made possible because Douglas County leveraged Youth Investment dollars to gain private contributions through our local rotary clubs and to write foundation grants, including \$150,000 awarded last year from the Ford Family Foundation. Recently, we received notice of an additional \$200,000 in Ford Family Foundation funds for Build Our Kids, based on our track record of successful outcomes.

Winston families experience many challenges. In 2011-12, 80% of children in our elementary schools qualified for free or reduced lunch. The Winston Area Community Partnership or "WACP" was formed in 1999 in response to two devastating incidents. Two middle school students died tragically, one by suicide, within five weeks of each other. A broad base of community leaders reacted to these tragedies by joining in an effort to improve the community. They decided it was time to "WAKE UP" and form a partnership.

After six years of planning and fund raising, key organizers cut the ribbon for a new community center which houses a senior center, library, meeting rooms, performing arts stage, and teen center. Support came from major foundations and more than 400 individual and business donors, with \$800,000 raised from our small local community. WACP leaders insisted that a teen center be included within the community center—even when seniors were unsure that a mix of ages would be acceptable to them. Seniors and youth alike agreed that the combination has been a good one.

WACP relies on county leadership to continue offering these important youth development opportunities through Build Our Kids. We are concerned that if the state Youth Development Council awards funds competitively to nonprofits that youth from rural Oregon will no longer reap the benefits from these experiences. Our youth in Winston deserve equal consideration to youth in urban parts of the state.

I urge passage of House Bill 2392, as amended.