



**Carla C. Piluso**  
STATE REPRESENTATIVE, DISTRICT 50  
900 Court St. NE, H-491  
Salem, OR 97301  
503-986-1450  
[rep.carlapiluso@state.or.us](mailto:rep.carlapiluso@state.or.us)

Date: March 10, 2015

To: Chair Gelser and Members of the Senate Human Services & Early Childhood Committee

From: Carla C. Piluso, State Representative, House District 50

RE: Senate Bill 500

Good afternoon, Chair Gelser and members of the Senate Committee on Human Services and Early Childhood. For the record, my name is Carla C. Piluso and I am the Representative from House District 50, site of the future home of the Boys and Girls Club Rockwood. I am here to speak on behalf of SB 500, to secure funding for a Boys & Girls Club facility in the Rockwood neighborhood.

The mission of the Boys and Girls Club of the Portland Metropolitan Area is to enable all young people, especially those who need it most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. The Boys & Girls Club Rockwood would serve east Multnomah County youth and families, an area of Oregon known to be historically underserved and lacking in vital community services.

I worked in law enforcement for 30 years with the Gresham Police Department and was honored to serve as chief for my last 6 years. I balanced my police career by working with non-profits that support the needs of families living in or on the brink of poverty.

I currently serve as the Board Chair of Human Solutions, a non-profit that serves outer east Portland and east Multnomah County; I chair Multnomah County's Commission on Children, Families and Communities and regularly volunteer with Snow-Cap Community Charities, the food bank for east Multnomah County.

From my experience, I can tell you that children in east Multnomah County are more likely to live in poverty, be food insecure and impacted by gang violence. The Boys & Girls Club Rockwood will benefit these youth and support families; it is so much more than an afterschool program.

Through the Club, youth can receive academic support, career preparation, nutritional information and access to health care, a positive space to develop healthy relationships—including a mentorship program, and prevention and intervention services for youth impacted by drugs and alcohol or struggling with mental health issues.

In the law enforcement and education communities, we know that the most effective programs in promoting positive life-outcomes for youth are administered in their community. Without the

Boys and Girls Club Rockwood, the children and teens that have the greatest needs for those services would be the hardest to reach.

Additionally, programs like this support families by allowing parents to work, or search for employment outside of normal school hours. When there is a Boys & Girls Club in a community, the whole community is better for it.

The Boys & Girls Club Portland and Metropolitan Area does great work and positively impacts the lives of the children and teens in their programs. By supporting this new facility we are transforming a neighborhood and serving the heart of the Rockwood community.

I made Gresham my home 36 years ago. I chose to raise and educate my daughter in Gresham. I live, play and work in Gresham. It is my home, my community and I am proud to be a part of Gresham. I have lived in Gresham long enough to remember a strong Rockwood, with a thriving business community, the best Spring Break carnival, neighbors helping neighbors and fine restaurants.

Five years ago, The Rockwood Building; a multi-service center, with affordable housing attached, was opened; two years later, the Multnomah County East County Courthouse was built; and 2 years after that the Gresham Police Department Rockwood Precinct was built; all approximately within a 1 mile radius of the new Boys and Girls Club Rockwood site. This construction was the beginning of change for Rockwood.

I believe, actually I know, the addition of the Boys and Girls Club Rockwood can be the catalyst for needed change and tip the scale for the re-birth of the Rockwood neighborhood. It will be the anchor for change and prosperity of Rockwood. Couple that with the growth of support, knowledge, self-esteem and positive role modeling, and we will have children and teens that will be far less likely to be suspects of or victims of crime. That is crime prevention at its finest.

Thank you, Chair Gelser and members of the committee, I appreciate your time and urge you to support SB 500.



Carla C. Piluso  
State Representative  
House District 50