

**Testimony for the Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Education**

**Re: HB 5017
March 10, 2015**

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Vice President for Legislation, Oregon PTA**

Oregon PTA is the largest and oldest parent organization in Oregon, with about 12,000 members in School Districts throughout the state. Adequate and stable funding for education is a key provision of our legislative platform, and is vitally important to families and kids. We believe that adequate and stable funding for education is the single most important issue facing Oregon.

While we appreciate your support of education last biennium, decades of disinvestment in education has resulted in programs cuts, fewer teachers, furlough days, and troubling student achievement outcomes. For example, Oregon has the lowest on- time graduation rate and second highest class size in the country, and nearly a year less than the national average in instructional time.

If Oregon is to meet its ambitious 40-40-20 goals, we need to reinvest in public education. However, at the \$7.25B co-chairs' recommended level, School Districts statewide face more cuts – to programs, instructional time, and teachers, resulting in larger class sizes. If you invest \$7.5B, School Districts will have the minimum needed to maintain current programs and avoid further cuts. If you invest even more – \$7.875B – you'll begin to change those troubling outcomes by adding instructional time, decreasing class size, and helping ALL kids achieve.

We urge you – Oregon's families urge you – to increase the investment in education, and give our kids a chance to fulfill their promise.

Thank you.