

Chair Roblan and Members of the Committee. I am Tami Castronovo from Salem, OR. Thank you for hearing my testimony on SB 321. As a concerned parent, I believe the decision about when a child is ready for formal education is best determined by his or her parents. I am very thankful that my husband and I were able to begin our son's formal education when he was developmentally ready. Mandating that every child begin their formal education at the age of 5 will result in frustration and discouragement, and possibly insecurity for children who are not ready and the teachers who are charged with educating them.

As a former 5 year old first grader in the 1968/69 school year, here in Salem at Richmond school, I can testify that I was not ready, I was in remedial reading and math, and was pulled out of class for those things during the day. I felt different, and that feeling stayed with me though out my entire school experience. As an adult home educator, I can also testify that I realized late in life that I understand concepts that I spent my first 35 years thinking I didn't because of that early impression in my first year of school. I would like to encourage to you consider that all children are not ready for formal education and the possible pressures of measuring up to a standard at that tender age.