



Date: March 30, 2015
To: House Education Committee, Chair Doherty & Members
From: Laurie Wimmer, OEA Government Relations Consultant
RE: *HB 3423 and HB 3499 [ELL Education Policy]*

Thank you for considering our support for both of the bills before you today, which seek in different ways to support the acquisition of academic English proficiency (rather than just conversational English literacy) by ELL students.

HB 3423 evolved from a work group process beginning in August 2014. This work involved a group of ELL and bilingual educators, as well as representatives from various community-based and education stakeholder groups. The mission of this group was to consider enhancements of the educational experience of ELL students in ways that did not involve additional state money, but did consider smart additions to the programs already in place. We consulted various groups to compose a list of such improvements, and we're proud to be a requester of this group effort.

HB 3499 emerged after many months of work to find compromises all parties could support after a proposal was advanced to change the formula for ELL funding and the decision-making around use of those resources. OEA and several of its members participated in the evolution of many of the concepts found in this bill, and we have also worked with the bill's sponsor to create a set of amendments that reflects the consensus we were able to reach late last week on this bill. In addition to the compromises we agreed to in the bill before you, we offered to migrate elements of the OEA group process bill into the other, so that you are able to move just one vehicle to the floor, which we hope you will agree to do.

The main distinction between the two bills is that HB 3423 addresses individual student supports while HB 3499 is concerned more with system-wide and school-based supports. We see the goals of the two approaches as compatible, and instead of asking you to choose between them, we hope you will support both proposals.

Accompanying this testimony is a one-page analysis of HB 3423, to give you a quick overview of that bill's original content. Also accompanying our testimony is a recent article on how ELL students in Oregon are faring – some good news, both in terms of state improvement and in terms of state-by-state comparisons.

Thank you so much for considering these bills, which envision a much richer educational experience for all of our students.