

Chair Representative Read and Committee Members

I am Don Domes, Retired CTE Engineering Teacher/Coach, also a Licensed Tax Consultant, and a Grandpa concerned about the future of Oregon.

HB 3511 is important because we have workforce and pipeline issues that need attention, and this bill is founded in enhancing best practice solutions that excite students and adults regarding Computer Science, Invention, Technology, and Engineering. Research tells us that students only spend about 14% of their time in a formal school environment. Only 1 in 7 of our high schools have a computer science course. Our dropout rate is embarrassing. In the tech sector we are told that we do not have enough qualified workers. Great efforts are being made to enhance STEM and CTE opportunities during school time. We also need to recognize where additional low hanging fruit is, which is in the time beyond the 14% of the time students are in formal school.

There is a place where students in the USA are the best in the world. We create the best Quarterbacks and linemen in the world. We do it with time beyond the formal school day. We do such an outstanding job that schools build facilities, pay coaches, host celebrations of the coaches and players, and the community becomes highly involved. The students get clear confirmation that adults value their involvement. The sports and athletic systems are a model of how to create the best in the world with our students.

Oregon has approximately 215,000 students in 4th to 8th grade. If we wanted to have just 25% of those students in an outside school time team experience in computer science, invention, technology, or engineering we would need opportunities for about 54,000 students. If that experience happened in a team of 25 students we would need 2,160 coaches/teachers. If that experience happened with a more reasonable ratio of 1 coach or teacher to 15 students we would need 3,600 coaches /teachers for the teams.

We know how motivated football players get for football game. Can you imagine having competitions for students in Computer Science, Invention, Technology, and Engineering? We have some of this in Oregon. ORTOP – the Oregon Robotics Tournament Outreach Program with over 600 teams has about 6,000 students involved. If we want 54,000 students involved we need 8 more organizations the size of ORTOP just to create the opportunity for 4th to 8th graders.

We need grants to empower the creation of the infrastructure for our students to have outside school time experiences in computer science, invention, technology, and engineering. These are areas of high need in our workforce. These are areas where every student involved can go PRO and earn a living wage.

OPAS started some of this work almost 10 years ago. With minimal funding it seeded several things that became best practice. When OUS was defunded in the last session, OPAS also collapsed. That orphaned some of the best practice providers. We need grants to revitalize those orphans as well as recruit a host of additional providers who can rise to this need. HB 3511 is from those of us in the trenches who know the kids and who know the need. HB 3511 is modeled after the highly successful CTE revitalization

grants. The target is K-12. It can empower providers that offer statewide opportunities or it can empower regional or local providers. Following the CTE revitalization grant model it will give us an opportunity to empower best practices and enhance opportunities for students.

I urge you to vote for HB 3511. Thank You

Don Domes

Retired CTE Engineering Teacher, Licensed Tax Consultant, and a Grandpa concerned about the future of Oregon.

April 8, 2015