

Chair Doherty, Vice Chairs Frederick and Sprenger, Members of the Committee,

We are submitting this testimony in favor of House Bill 4024. We want to make sure that this law covers not only peer to peer bullying and harassment, but bullying committed by people in authority roles within schools as well.

For 3 years our family was in conflict with Brookings Harbor School District 17-C over the harassment of our teenage daughter by her basketball coach. Our daughter suffered for a year before she asked us for help. We followed the formal complaint filing procedure as laid out by the school and documented future occurrences of the harassment on a timeline. We knew we were not the first people to complain about bullying within the girls' basketball program, but as it came out later no records of other complaints were kept. We followed every protocol and kept trying to get a response from the District. Our complaints were never addressed. We never received any formal correspondence from the school district with regard to our complaints.

Things continued to get worse for our daughter since she had decided to come forward, so we began working with the Oregon Department of Education and an investigation was completed. Our situation was made more complex because James (the father of the victim) has been a teacher in District 17-C for 25+ years and the wife of the coach in accused of harassment is a member of the school board. As the investigation was being completed our daughter continued to suffer. Eventually the ODE handed down an order in our case. I have attached it for you to look over. The district took little or no action to address the issues in the ODE order and the time it took and the pain it caused to even get this order was tremendous. Finally we settled the dispute in mediation but the time spent in a hostile education environment is time my daughter will never get back.

We feel it is extremely important for this bill to pass. House Bill 4024 needs to encompass, School Board Members, School District Employees, Volunteers, as well as student to student bullying, and to hold all accountable to the same standards set forth in House Bill 4024.

Sincerely,

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