

TO: Chair Doherty and House Education Committee Members
FROM: Julien Comardelle
5715 Broadway St., West Linn, OR

DATE: February 10, 2016

RE: In Support of HB4119

Dear Chair Doherty and Committee Members,

My name is Julien Comardelle and I'm a student at West Linn High School.

I am here to voice my support as a student for the removal of the open enrollment sunset. Open enrollment has allowed a large number of students to attend schools that they would otherwise have been unable to. Many of these students as a result have been given an education of greater focus on the student's desired career path than the one they would have had in another school. The open enrollment system has given parents and students an important liberty, the liberty to tailor their education to their needs. Having an open enrollment program allows parents to send their children to schools which will give them the education that best suits their interests and needs. For example, a child living in West Linn, and attending West Linn High School-a school viewed as a college preparatory school- can instead opt to go to a school with a more technical focused education if that is what suits them; the same works in reverse. This ability to choose the curriculum that best suits them, allows students to attend schools where they will be engaged and learn.

On a personal note, I spent three years as an open enrollment student at Athey Creek Middle School. Attending Athey Creek was much harder because my parents had to drive me to school everyday, and pick me up. My parents felt so strongly that I should get the best education that I could, that they went above and beyond in working with me to attend a school outside of my district. Looking back, I cannot thank them enough. Athey Creek was and still is an incredible school; it offered me opportunities that were more diverse than the district schools and going there laid the groundwork for my future academic and community service careers. Now, I am no longer an open enrollment user, in fact I walk to school. However, the point I want to make is that the parents who use open enrollment do not just utilize other districts' resources, but sacrifice their own time to take their children to the school that they want. Their commitment to their child's future should give them the liberty to choose the school that will secure a future for their child.

The removal of this sunset is one of the biggest decisions that this session will have to make and I hope that this committee will take the first step in seeing that it is removed.

Thank you