



City of Portland

February 28, 2017

Senator Mark Hass, Chair  
Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue  
900 NE Court Street, HR A  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Hass and Members of the Committee:

I write to you in support of Senate Bill 123 and support for critical programming for children's services, including education, civics, arts and music, physical recreation, and health and well-being.

In 2002, voters approved the Portland Children's Levy. The Levy, which now generates more than \$15 million annually, grew out of a need to increase children's access to proven programs that support positive early development, school engagement and academic achievement, high school graduation, and family safety and stability. Portland overwhelmingly renewed the levy for an additional five years in Fall 2008 and again in Spring 2013.

As many as 30,000 children (birth to 5 years old) in Multnomah County could enter school unprepared for kindergarten. Children facing limited opportunities for early learning experiences come from historically underserved populations: children navigating poverty, children of color, children of single parents, and children of mothers with low levels of education. Best practice interventions, like those sponsored by the Portland Children's Levy, support and strengthen children's early cognitive, social, and emotional development; providing these opportunities to historically underserved populations can help mitigate early disparities.

I urge your support of SB 123 and opportunities for investment in early childhood, after school and summer programs for kids in our state.

Sincerely,

Dan Saltzman  
Commissioner, City of Portland