



April 5, 2017

Chair Doherty and Members of the House Education Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 3191.

The Oregon Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs (The Alliance) serves nearly 69,000 youth through membership and community outreach operating 28 Club sites across the state in 18 cities. Our focus is creating pathways to *Great Futures* by supporting youth Club members in three key areas:

1. Academic success;
2. Creating good character and leadership traits; and
3. Leading healthy lifestyles.

Our mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens by providing a world-class Club Experience that assures success is within reach of every young person who enters our doors, with all members on track to graduate from high school with a plan for the future, demonstrating good character and citizenship, and living a healthy lifestyle.

Ensuring a meaningful education for every child has never been more critical than it is today. Now more than ever, community partners play a critical role in shaping the lives of America's youth. This is where the Oregon Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs is positioned to make a significant difference. We have access to the youth who need support the most, with targeted programs that help youth develop positive outcomes and achieve great futures at hours where youth are most vulnerable to negative influences. When young people enjoy school and feel a sense of accomplishment, they are more likely to finish school and go on to post-secondary education or additional job training, and to become lifelong learners.

Boys & Girls Clubs provide tailored interventions where Club and school district partnerships are established and support data sharing to understand the impacts of Club programs on academic and nonacademic learning objectives. During the school year, **Power Hour: Making Minutes Count** provides daily academic mentoring and tutoring, that includes goal setting and incentives. **Summer Brain Gain** adds engaging, educational activities to the typical summer camp experience for youth ages 6 to 18 years old, adding weekly thematic modules that build to a final, culminating project or event. As a result, kids develop higher-order thinking skills through the Summer Brain Gain Modules while staying on track for the coming school year.

Each summer in America, an estimated 43 million children in the U.S. miss out on expanded learning opportunities that could prevent them from falling behind. During summer, most youth lose about two months' worth of math skills. Low-income youth also lose more than two months' worth of reading skills, while their middle-class peers make slight gains.

Summer learning losses can stack up from year to year, causing low-income children to fall further and further behind, ultimately endangering their chances of high school graduation. More than half

of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities.

The pilot program proposed in HB 3191 is a good step towards ensuring youth that need it most are exposed to programs like Summer Brain Gain and are given the opportunity and guidance to reach their full potential. Please join the Oregon Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs in supporting HB 3191.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Wilson
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