

Testimony in Support of SB 353-1
By Betsy Salter, Parent of a PPS Student
HD 46

Last November I voted No on ballot measure 98. During the run up to election day, I took every opportunity to urge other voters not to support M 98. Why? Because for months I had been hearing that the state expected to face a significant budget shortfall for the next biennium. I was astonished that the sponsors of M 98 ignored this truth knowing that funding to implement M 98's three specific high school programs would exacerbate budget cuts to Oregon's chronically underfunded K-12 public schools. I believe M 98 should not be funded until after the state has raised sufficient revenue to maintain current levels of services.

This week I watched with sadness a PPS board meeting where they were briefed on the [staffing cuts](#) that will have to be made, primarily in high schools and the central office. These cuts mean my daughter's senior year experience in an Oregon public school will involve larger class sizes and fewer electives. This is shameful and unacceptable. The Legislature must raise more revenue to avoid these cuts to our public schools and other public health and safety services.

To the extent that M 98 is funded in the next biennium, I support SB 353-1 because it will provide school districts and high school administrators with the flexibility they must have to administer M 98 funds in a manner that will best serve their respective students and families in terms of High School graduation support, CTE and College prep programs and services. Our high schools and school districts want to do whatever it takes to keep kids in school and graduate on time prepared for college or career. We need to give them the resources and flexibility to administer those resources to best meet the needs of their particular students and families.

I also hope that SB 353-1 will prevent or minimize the expansion of the Oregon Department of Education in order to distribute, monitor and hold districts accountable for how M 98 funds are used. Oregon needs to increase funding to our public schools to expand learning opportunities, lower class sizes and provide wrap around services for our growing numbers of children who are living in poverty, homeless and/or historically underserved. Oregon does not need more state employees to create, administer and report on a new M 98 grant program. Assuming we can't afford to hire more state employees given the \$1.6 B budget shortfall, I'm sure current ODE employees don't need additional responsibilities on top of their already overflowing plates.

Please support SB 353-1.

Sincerely,

Betsy Salter, PPS Parent
HD 46