



TESTIMONY ON SB 353-1 BEFORE THE SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Date: 4/6/17



Chair Roblan and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

The Oregon Business Association-Associated Oregon Industries (OBA-AOI) work to develop a world-class education system from pre-kindergarten through higher education. We believe we have the ability to achieve our goal of 40-40-20 through robust education funding and targeted investments focused on: **reducing chronic absenteeism, improving our graduation rate, and closing the achievement gap.**

OBA-AOI opposes the -1 amendment to SB 353.

OBA-AOI supported Measure 98 along with over 65% of Oregon voters. Career Technical Education (CTE), dropout prevention and college prep programs are needed now more than ever in our schools. We have one of the worst chronic absenteeism rates in the nation, the third lowest graduation rate in the nation, and an achievement gap that fails low income students, minority students, students with disabilities and English Language Learners.

Reducing chronic absenteeism: Students enrolled in CTE are less likely to be chronically absent. Evidence based dropout prevention programs also help reduce chronic absenteeism. Some students engage more with career and technical skills while other students are interested in college and benefit from college prep programs.

Improving our graduation rate: The class of 2014 CTE graduation rate was 87.5% compared to 72% for all students.

Closing the achievement gap: The class of 2014 CTE graduation rate for Black/African American students was 84% compared to 60.2%, a 23.8% difference. Please see attached graph illustrating increased outcomes for students enrolled in CTE courses disaggregated by race, income and other factors, the list goes on.

OBA-AOI supported Measure 98 because of the evidence based programs that schools will have access to that will help us **reduce chronic absenteeism, improving our graduation rate, and closing the achievement gap.**

Many students don't currently have access to all of these programs, which is why Measure 98 was needed. All three programs work best when students have access to all of the programs and resources provided by them. Eliminating the requirement that the funds be spent on all three of the pillars is not what voters approved. There are only a

few districts that have maximized all three of the pillars of Measure 98 and very few students that have access to all of the three pillars. Measure 98 would correct that so that all students have access to all three, and the -1 amendment would roll that back.

We urge you to table the -1 amendment to SB 353.

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