

May 15, 2017

Margaret Doherty
Oregon State Legislature
Rep.MargaretDoherty@oregonlegislature.gov

Re: *Senate Bill 1002 : Giving Kids the Opportunity to Learn*

Dear Representative Doherty:

As a lawyer, a business owner, and a mother, nothing in my mind is more critical than allowing children the opportunity to learn and obtain the education that they need to become contributing members of our society. Our schools in Oregon have struggled for years to serve all of our children and parents and communities have stepped up to provide the resources that our children need, such as tutoring for dyslexic children.

As a mother of a 12 year old son who is dyslexic, I have spent countless hours and significant sums of money to provide tutoring for Finn to unlock reading and writing in a way that teachers are not trained to do. Finn is incredibly bright and incredibly dyslexic and without tutoring I know his anxiety and stress would overcome his otherwise kindhearted and fun spirit.

At Portland Public, our teachers at first dismissed our concerns that our son had a learning disability and incorrectly informed us that he had a behavior problem at the age of 5. We attended therapy and learned that, no, it was not a behavior problem, but a struggle to learn. We had him privately tested to show the school that he had a learning disability. We lost two years of remediation and support for Finn due to the teachers' and administrators' lack of knowledge. Finn is not alone in that experience.

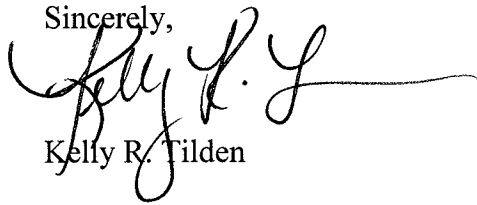
For over three years, Finn attended tutoring three mornings a week before school. My husband and I juggled our work schedules and definitely put our careers at risk to make sure he could attend this tutoring at home in the morning when he was awake and alert. We were not allowed to have tutoring at school at any time. This is despite the fact that he attended after care every day at school. Last year, we had a new tutor who could only meet with Finn after school. We had to hire a babysitter to get Finn home and pay the tutor to also meet with Finn, over \$90 an hour. This year, we have a different tutor and leave work early to drive across town each week to meet with her. I have the ability to then go back to work or work remotely late at night to catch up on that lost time. Many parents do not have that option. **Providing access to tutoring for dyslexic students is an issue of equity and cannot be dismissed as a problem of the very few. The very families who need this access the most are likely not even aware of this bill.**

Until all of our teachers are trained on how to teach students with dyslexia, 1 out of 5 students, we have an obligation to provide resources and access to resources to these

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children. This bill to help children arises from parents trying to help their children and so many other children with the similar need. It is about equity and common sense and decency. I am writing not to help my child but to help all the younger children and their families who may not have the resources and flexibility that my family has had. We have our work cut out for us in terms of public education but these kids don't have time to lose and need the appropriate instruction that tutoring provides.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelly R. Tilden", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kelly R. Tilden

Cc: hed.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov
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