

Testimony on SB 437

June 13, 2017

Dear Chair Roblan and members of the Senate Education Committee:

My name is Sandra Nelson, and I have lived in Beaverton for the last thirty years. I am writing to urge you to support Education Savings Accounts for Oregon students such as those set out in SB 437 with the -1 Amendment. This bill will NOT deprive public school students of needed funds, but it will give each student a chance to get an education that best fits his needs and learning style.

My two children are now grown, but I was privileged to be able to offer them a variety of educational options based on their needs at various times in their growing-up years. These options included homeschool, private school, and public school education. Today, I volunteer in the public schools, tutoring kids who have a certain need that their teachers can't meet, but I have also worked with kids who have major needs, who don't "fit" into the public school at all, who need individual help that their public school simply isn't able to offer. IEPs (Individualized Education Programs) may sound good on paper, but they often don't work in reality.

Since we, as a society, have chosen to use our taxes to pay for children's education, why would we not try to offer them the best education possible, that is, one that fits their learning styles and builds on each one's unique gifts? Education Savings Accounts would allow students to find the mix of educational services that is right for them.

I am very excited that we in Oregon, who value choice in so many areas of our lives, would help to lead the nation in choice in education through Education Savings Accounts. Thank you for your serious consideration of this terrific opportunity for Oregon children.

Respectfully,

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