

Joint Committee on Tax Reform
Public Testimony HB 2830, June 12, 2017
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Good morning Co-Chairs Hass and Barnhart, and members of the Committee. I'm Betty Reynolds, President of the Oregon School Boards Association. I also serve on the West Linn Wilsonville School Board.

First, thank you for your courage and your leadership in taking on the issue of revenue reform and exploring solutions to address Oregon's tax structure.

The OSBA's top legislative priority, for years, has been adequate and stable funding for education. As you know, Oregon's budget is more dependent on a personal income tax than any other state. Our unbalanced tax structure is very vulnerable to boom and bust revenue cycles, and education funding is not stable. For example since the recession of 2008 we have seen teachers laid off by the thousands, we watched our school year shrink, our class sizes increase, and achievement decline. Unfortunately, our graduation rate is one of the lowest in the country.

In February, OSBA conducted a poll of Oregonians, which showed Oregonians greatly value education and support revenue reform for large businesses, provided it's dedicated to education.

We are encouraged by the proposals in HB 2830, which, coupled with some cost containment proposals, will do much to address not only our current budget challenges, but will provide much needed stability in state school funding for the future. Again, we applaud you for your leadership in taking on this challenge, and helping give more than 578,000 public school students the education they deserve.

Thank you.