



Date: June 13, 2017

To: Oregon Joint Committee on Tax Reform

From: Sara Starlin, Speech Pathologist Springfield OR

Re: HB 2830, Revenue Reform

Co-Chairs Hass and Barnhart, members of the committee. My name is Sara Starlin, I live in Eugene. I am a speech pathologist at Maple Elementary in Springfield. I am one of the Oregon Education Association's 44,000 members across the state of Oregon.

90% of the students at Maple qualify for free/reduced lunch. I have a caseload of 54 students. Over the year, I attend over 100 meetings related to Individual Education Programs. I serve students with a wide range of needs. Students with articulation disorders, language disorders, autism, students who are nonverbal. These students are in kindergarten through 5th grade, including students in a Life Skills classroom.

I am responsible for providing their specialized instruction, programming speech generating devices for my students who are nonverbal, communicating with teachers about accommodations in the classroom, meeting with parents, and completing all compliance paperwork. My budget consists of \$100 from my principal and \$100 from PTA. I create all my own materials and write grants to cover the costs of curriculum that I want to buy because I don't have a curriculum budget. I use an audiometer for hearing screenings that is held together with packing tape. Even with these limited resources, I am proud of the work that I do and the amazing progress my students make. Recently, one of my students who has no verbal communication skills was able to use his speech generating device to tell staff that he was sad because his teacher was out for the day.

With every decision that I make about programming or curriculum, I ask myself "Is this what's best for kids?" As you look at the proposed budget and revenue sources, please ask yourself "Is this what's best for kids?" If the answer is no, then we need to make changes. While the bill you are considering is a step in the right direction and I support it, my children (the ones at school and the ones at home) deserve far more.

I'm very concerned that because corporations pay so little in taxes in Oregon, we are going to have to make cuts to education. We can't keep piecing together budgets like this. We need a revenue package that is significant and reverses decades of disinvestment in our schools and services. I hope the legislature will pass a tax increase that will lead to a meaningful, long-term difference in our state.

Thank you for your time.