

TESTIMONY of BUD LANE, VICE-CHAIRMAN
CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF SILETZ INDIANS
To the SENATE EDUCATION COMMITTEE On SENATE BILL 13

February 9, 2017

Chairman Roblan, Members of the Education Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of this well-intentioned legislation, Senate Bill 13. My name is Bud Lane and I serve as Vice-Chairman of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians. Our tribe also extends thanks to the Governor for bringing forward this bill that we have worked toward for many years.

The Siletz is one of the largest tribes in Oregon, with over 5000 members. Our original reservation, established by Executive Order in 1855, encompassed 1.1 million acres of the Oregon Coast. Our tribe is a confederation of 54 bands and tribes from all over western Oregon, from the California border to the Columbia River, and to the crest of the Cascade Mountains on the east.

There is not one story to tell, but many, even within just the Siletz Tribes. That is certainly a challenge for educators. The Siletz Tribe assists and supports a charter public school in the town of Siletz. So we know first-hand the challenge of distilling a complex history into a usable curriculum, across age groups even for our own children and neighbors.

It is critically important to include tribal history alongside our modern presence and legal status and rights. For most schools, the story of Indians in Oregon is non-existent. Yet Oregon is home to nationally relevant events, like the Rogue Indian War and the flight of Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce. In Oregon, as anywhere in America, there are the untold stories of broken treaties, forced migration and confinement.

Fostering a complete education of the history of this state and the people who lived here since time immemorial is a worthy enough goal. But how can tribes in

modern times function as governments alongside our federal, state and local governments if there is not a basic understanding of our place in that structure?

So of course, the Siletz Tribe supports the State requiring school districts to adopt a Curriculum relating to the Native American experience in Oregon. We acknowledge the bill's provision that allows for collaboration with Oregon's federally recognized tribes, but feel it needs to go a step further. The Board of Education must ensure that all Oregon tribes are in complete agreement with the material developed for the curriculum, before it is ever published and distributed to schools.

Tribes are currently working individually with their school districts to develop classroom materials and experiences that are relevant for their area and relevant tribes. Though voluntary, in many cases that has been successful. As I read this legislation, it requires *one* curriculum to be developed for *all* schools throughout the state. While the Siletz Tribe applauds the intention, we fear this could be abused if any tribe were to unduly influence the content of that curriculum.

Thank you for considering the challenging task of bringing Native curriculum into Oregon schools. I urge you to promptly pass this important bill.