

February 4, 2019

House Committee on Education  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St NE  
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Testimony on HB 2247

My name is Amy Hutchinson, and I'm the Library Director for the Lake County Library District. Thank you for making time for me to speak with you today in support of HB 2247, the Imagination Library bill. This letter is a recap of my verbal testimony.

The Friends of Lake County Library partnered with us to start the Imagination Library program in Lake County in January, 2018 as a result of the Rippey Foundation's incentive match. We now have over 200 kids enrolled. Last year, those children received 1,746 books at home through the Imagination Library.

In addition to the literacy benefits the program brings to the children, joining the Imagination Library also brought some unexpected wins for both the Friends of Lake County Library and the Lake County Library District. As a result of joining, the Friends have activated a completely different group of members to engage with community in a new and successful way by developing a partnership with a local business, engaging in successful fundraising, telling the Imagination Library story to our parents and potential funders; and 'owning' a significant new program in the community.

The library has also reaped unanticipated benefits of the Imagination Library, which I believe has raised the library's profile in the community. Registration for the program offers a really positive 'first library experience' for new community members, at least those that have preschoolers. Having the Imagination Library books arrive directly at home engages people who feel the library is 'too far away' to have anything to offer them. (We have 8,300 square miles and four little library buildings.)

Working with our community early learning partners to increase Imagination Library registrations has brought us closer ties with them for other early learning work. As one example, Public Health now gives bags of books and literacy information to parents from the library when they pick up a birth certificate for their new little one. Of course, Imagination Library registration forms are included in the bags.

The Imagination Library program has been amazing for Lake County and we strongly support HB 2247. I'm happy to answer any questions about the program.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Amy C. Hutchinson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the "n" at the end.

Amy C. Hutchinson  
Library Director