



March 13, 2019

Re: HB 2389 Oregon Bright Futures Plan

Dear Chair Doherty of the House Committee on Education,

The Oregon Business Council's Poverty Task Force is pleased to support HB 2389 which calls for a task force to further develop and finalize the design of the Oregon Bright Futures Plan. Reducing poverty below 10% by 2020 is a key priority of the Oregon Business Plan and OBC's Poverty Task Force. In order to achieve this goal, we are focusing on strategies that create opportunity for all Oregonians. Of particular importance to us is ensuring that the next generation of Oregonians is prepared for rewarding work and civic life. The Oregon Bright Futures Plan will provide the seed resources that allow families—specifically those with tight budgets—to dream with confidence, that their children will be able to graduate from high school, get a higher degree, and pursue a fulfilling career.

Research on children's savings accounts (CSAs) shows that with just some savings, children are three times more likely to attend college and four times more likely to graduate from college.¹ In Oregon, we expect that universal and automatic CSAs will positively impact students of color and those that are economically disadvantaged who are less likely to graduate from high school and college than their white and economically advantaged peers.²³ As higher education is often the onramp to a gratifying career pathway, the Oregon Bright Futures Plan would promote economic mobility and reduce the profound racial wealth gap that exists in our state.

As leaders in the business community, we understand value of asset building opportunities. Just as a business is not created overnight, saving for a large asset such as education takes time—in fact, the more time the better. We believe that by investing in every Oregon child through a savings account at birth, we will truly be investing in Oregon's future prosperity.

Thank you for considering HB 2389. We look forward to seeing the Oregon Bright Futures Plan through implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Duncan Wyse", is written over a light blue background.

Duncan Wyse

President

Oregon Business Council

¹ Prosperity Now. Children's Savings Accounts Overview.

https://prosperitynow.org/sites/default/files/resources/Childrens-Savings-Accounts-Overview_0.pdf

² Oregon Department of Education. "Graduation Report- School Year 2017-2018."

<https://www.oregon.gov/ode/reports-and-data/students/Pages/Cohort-Graduation-Rate.aspx>

³ The Chronicle of Higher Education. "College Completion: Oregon."

https://collegecompletion.chronicle.com/state/#state=or§or=public_four