

# YWCA IS ON A MISSION

March 28, 2019

Jennifer Williamson, Chair  
House Judiciary Committee  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Williamson, Vice-Chairs Sprenger and Gorsek, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

I am writing today to express my support for HB 2652. The YWCA is one of the oldest and largest women's organizations in the nation, with 2.6 million members across 300 local associations, the YWCA of Greater Portland has been serving Oregonians for over 110 years, while evolving to meet the changing needs of the women we serve. However, our core mission has not changed: eliminating racism, empowering women and promoting peace, justice, dignity and freedom for all.

It is natural then that we support increased funding to the Oregon Department of Education to develop and implement programs promoting gender equity and preventing gender discrimination and sexual harassment, including compliance with Title IX.

Current support for Title IX at the school levels is nowhere near adequate. Recent state and federal Department of Education policies and practices have had a chilling effect upon provision of gender specific outreach, engagement and instruction for girls and women in Oregon. Federal and state interpretation of Title IX policies have resulted in providing advantages to men and boys at the expense of lifting up opportunities for girls and women.

Utilization by girls and women in the high wage/high demand categories afforded by increased CTE funding seriously lags boys and men: this is not only a failure to meet the intention of Oregon's added CTE funding. It has long lasting costs to our communities as women, most of whom will be raising children as a single parent for some period of time, remain in low wage jobs (child care, adult care, human services); fail to afford quality child care; and families fall into poverty.

Examples taken from a ODE's 2016-2017 data:

- Automotive/Heavy Equipment 15.3% girls
- Architecture/Construction 19.9% girls
- Engineering Technology 20.6% girls
- Information/Communication Technology 29.2% girls
- Manufacturing 15.8% girls

eliminating  
empowering  
**ywca**

of greater portland

PO Box 4587 | Portland, OR | 97208 | 503.294.7400 | [ywcapdx.org](http://ywcapdx.org)

It was not the intention of the legislators nor the voters that additional CTE funding would be invested in continuing the existing inequities of opportunity in the trades/professions.

Additional Title IX funding can provide training for teachers and students in creating welcoming environments for girls in high wage/high demand categories of CTE (automotive, architecture/construction, engineering technology, IT, manufacturing), as well as for men in the areas in which they are under-represented in CTE (education and training, health sciences, human services). There are methods that are being tried across the country in the name of Title IX that are proving effective.

That training will have a direct impact on the other social factors intended to be addressed by Title IX: Bullying. Sexual harassment. Gender bias. Discrimination on the basis of race, gender, sexual orientation or identity, religion. The curriculum includes increasing understanding of the damaging effects of implicit biases: how they are formed and effect our every waking moment. Including how we do – or don't – create welcoming environments, classrooms and expectations that will allow all of our students to achieve their greatest potential. Safely. And with dignity and respect that they deserve.

The long term result?

- Confident, healthy young people
- Reductions in rape, sexual assault, sexual harassment, bullying and assault
- Improved graduation rates. Lower dropout rates.
- Fewer families living in poverty.
- Increased community safety.

Please support HB 2562 so the state can begin to address at least some of the issues I've shared. Thank you.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Susan Stoltenberg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Susan Stoltenberg  
CEO, YWCA of Greater Portland