

Dear Committee Members,

I'm writing to provide comment to the Joint Committee on Student Success for the public hearing on Thursday, April 11 regarding House Bill 2019.

I was glad to see that your committee has approved roughly \$400 million in new investments in early childhood programs and services. Investing in early childhood reduces inequality, expands young minds, and sets children on the path to success.

I learned at the McMinnville City Council meeting this week that Oregon has the 2nd highest homeless population in the country! Rural as well as Urban. I believe this is a direct result from the cuts in Education funding that Oregon started more than 20 years ago. Let's move past the recrimination of those decisions and pass this bill to start righting the next generations!

Our state cannot afford to have our children's vulnerabilities result in homelessness. Our children of color are the next inventors, scientists to cure cancer, solve climate change, etc. Their challenges increase their grit and resilience and lead them to thinking outside the box of dominant culture.

Oregon is such a brilliant, beautiful place. Honor our natural resources by investing in our children that are our human resources and 21st century stewards of what your immigrant ancestors started.

Thank you for reading my comment and for your service to make our home an equitable place on earth!

Kymerli Contreras

Sincerely,  
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