

April 11, 2019

To our esteemed legislators,

To begin, thank you to those legislators that have been listening when educators share their stories of what is happening in our classrooms. Thank you for hearing our needs for behavioral and social emotional supports, restorative justice, trauma informed practices, and increased academic supports for all students.

Two billion dollars would go a long way to meet some of those needs, and it's clear that you had heard what we were asking for when you outline some of the ways schools could apply to use the 1 billion dollars earmarked for those types of practices in HB2019.

It's a start, but it is not the truly progressive bill that many of us were hoping to see in this year of democratic supermajority.

It does not address the \$250 million dollar baseline budget shortfall for the 2019–2020 school year, and will do nothing to pay down the debt and damage from three decades of decreased funding. This bill would not help my district hire back positions we have lost in the last decade or so, including PE teachers for elementary, and full day educational assistants for our special education programs. It does not help all schools meet the Quality Education Model which addresses so many needs that educators have identified as burdening our schools.

To meet that, we need 4 billion in new education funding, distributed amongst all schools, without hoops to jump through or strings attached. HB 2019 is a start, but it's not yet enough to meet our students increasing needs.

The modest tax, "thinly spread", across corporations in the form of a commercial activities tax, is not progressive enough. It would hit smaller businesses harder than multinational, multi-billion dollar corporations. This does nothing to upend our inequitable system in which multi-million and multi-billion dollar corporations pay a lower income tax rate than working class families.

The Oregon Revenue Round Table developed a plan that was progressive, adequate, equitable, and viable. It focuses on an increased corporate tax rate, an improved corporate minimum tax, an expanded corporate tax base, and the elimination of reduced tax rates for so-called "pass through" business profits.

A more progressive funding plan is possible. We need to see legislation that puts the need of students over corporate profit.

We need a tax that does not pit educators against other working class folks. In a time of historically unprecedented income inequality, this means raising corporate income and minimum tax rates for the wealthiest businesses and individuals. It means prioritizing and reinvesting in historically marginalized communities by eliminating the costly tax breaks and loopholes that rob our communities of resource. Living in Portland, everywhere you look, one can see signs of economic boom; but that isn't felt by all Oregonians. The wealth is there, it's just sitting in the bank accounts of a select group.

And I understand in Oregon, it can, and likely will, go to referendum. But we have your back as long as it's something worth fighting for. Teachers, school districts, parents, and many community members will show up for a plan that builds our schools to these inclusive, welcoming, equitable, and

engaging places of learning that ALL of us want. You WILL need our help. So give us a bill we can fight for.

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