

Testimony in favor of SB 543

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Thank You Chair [Kenya-Guyer](#) and Committee for allowing me to testify.

Less than 18% of a child's waking hours are spent in school by age 18. One hundred years ago many children in Oregon significantly went home to work on farms and in businesses where they learned many life skills. Many of us who are over 60 (meaning we were in school 50 or more years ago) probably remember a childhood where the school of life continued after the school day. In many cases we got to learn job skills and have significant interaction with adults. We did not have cell phones, video games, microwaves, or the Internet.

Modern society is much different today with people crammed together, almost like sardines, in many of our metro areas. The outdoor play space as well as adult interaction opportunities are very different. Many children do not have a garden or even a yard. There is little opportunity for these kids to build a tree fort or create something with tools. For many, those experiences lead to jobs later in life that were associated with beyond the bell activities from childhood.

The opportunity and the need to provide enrichment for kids has never been greater. Ungraded growth opportunities during outside school time is that big opportunity. To let the over 82% of a child's waking time escape is a travesty.

This bill is not a requirement that we provide Outside School Time experiences, it only provides a local option to fund opportunities. It gives communities that aspire to have opportunities like the successful SUN program in Multnomah County the empowerment to do so.

Imagine a 5 gallon bucket as representing the school day. That day is structured with a multitude of graded and tested experiences. There are more than four more buckets of time before age 18. We need to empower communities to be able to create outside school time enrichment activities for kids during some of that valuable time.

Thank you