

I am writing to encourage you to pass SB 543.

I am aware that the League of Oregon Cities is opposed to the bill, but as Mayor of Tualatin I am supporting it because of the value it would add to the kids and families of Tualatin as well as our businesses. Kids who participate in these programs are more likely to graduate and do better as employees and citizens. Compression is not a big factor in Tualatin and our kids are a priority.

Funds are inadequate for after school and summer programs. No funds are allocated by the state for after school or summer programs. A limited amount of pass-through federal money is available. Most counties do not allocate any of their funds to these programs. Some cities provide limited funding. Non-profit programs exist but they are not available in all geographic areas. Access is difficult for many children due to wait lists, fees, and/or transportation barriers. Some recreation programs exist but they usually require additional fees and they may be difficult to access due to geographic and/or transportation barriers. Not all children are interested in recreation programs or able to participate due to physical limitations.

SB 543 does not ask for State funds. It only allows citizens to sign petitions to organize children's service districts in a democratic manner to serve the children of their community.

As concerned Oregonians, I urge you to pass this bill.

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