

Good Afternoon,

I am writing today in support of LC 21. As the Superintendent of Dufur School District #29, I know how deeply all of the education professionals I work with care about the future of our students and schools. We have worked hard to adapt to the challenges of COVID-19 throughout the year, prioritizing both the safety of our students and their education.

One challenge we continue to face is a lack of certainty around COVID-19 liability. All Oregon schools carry liability insurance, but these policies do not offer coverage for the risk of unintentional spread of viruses such as COVID-19. Without this insurance, the financial risk for schools is too great – one lawsuit could sink a district's finances and its ability to serve Oregon students. For a rural district like mine, that would mean fiscal peril and a huge setback for our community.

LC 21 addresses this challenge with a balanced approach, ensuring accountability for reckless or intentional misconduct while also providing the needed protection to districts that comply with state and federal COVID-19 guidelines.

I urge you to please pass LC 21 during the upcoming special session. Thank you.

Jack Henderson

Superintendent, Dufur School District #29