



**Oregon Senate Education Committee
Testimony on House Bill 4033
February 15, 2022**

Dear Chair Dembrow, Co-Chair Thomsen, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians, I am writing to urge your support of House Bill 4033.

As you know, last year, the legislature passed a landmark bill in HB 2055 to create a Tribal Early Learning Hub to support the government-to-government relationship between the state and nine federally-recognized sovereign tribes.

Specifically, our purpose is to better coordinate and collaborate on early childhood programs to ensure that our governments are maximizing access to high-quality, culturally responsive, and developmentally appropriate early care and education opportunities for tribal children and families.

This bill amends the Tribal Advisory Committee to keep the membership to official government representatives from each of the nine sovereign governments and the State of Oregon. It is not necessary or appropriate to have parent representatives from non-governmental entities serving on this committee. There are better, more effective, and expansive ways to engage families in meeting the needs of native and tribal children.

Each Oregon Tribe does extensive outreach and engagement with our tribal families - which is the information we bring to this government-to-government committee to support how we organize and leverage our collective resources to reach more families. The Cow Creek Tribe, for example, has regular parent engagement activities scheduled for our Yimisa Preschool Promise parents. The Yimisa parents have regular contact with Preschool staff during student drop-offs and pickups. They have the opportunity to voice any concerns or make any suggestions regarding preschool programming.

In many ways, it is like the legislative process where the public can provide input, but the government officials decide how to distribute resources. Our Tribes have elected councils, and we, as their education officials, advise on allocating resources. Putting non-government officials in a decision-making position about tribal government funds is not appropriate.

Please support HB 4033, so we can continue to build on the last year's collaboration in the most efficient way possible with the governmental program experts from our sovereign governments.

Thank you.

Sandra Henry
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