

Submitter: Kyle Stevens
On Behalf Of: Southwestern Oregon Workforce Investment Board
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB531

Senator David Brock Smith
Senate Bill 531
Salem, OR

Dear Senator David Brock Smith,

My name is Kyle Stevens, and I am the Executive Director at the Southwestern Oregon Workforce Investment Board. We were happy to be a recipient of Oregon Community Summer grant funds in 2022 and are taking this opportunity to share our most sincere support of Senate Bill 531.

We know that Oregon is rich with summer opportunities but in our communities, we see how access to engaging/enriching/necessary opportunities remains inequitable for those in our rural area.

Last summer, with \$326,670 our program provided stipends for 18 youth to complete their high school diplomas, 14 students to complete their GED and 92 students to recover missed credits needed to keep them on track for high school completion.

We know that there are kids in our community who do not have the support and resources that could help them thrive.

We know that this is just one example of why it is critically important to support Oregon youth and families with access to meaningful, relevant summer opportunities. Every Oregon youth deserves access to safe, inclusive, and welcoming summer learning environments that will help them become a thriving adult.

In order to continue our work of reaching youth in our rural communities that need support in completing their secondary education, sustainable funding and systemic support is key.

As a constituent, I ask that you please support Senate Bill 531 and get funds into our communities sooner to help ensure we can meet the needs of those continuing to struggle within our inequitable systems.

We would also welcome a virtual meeting or program visit for you to hear more about the impact we have seen in young people and throughout our community.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to support youth and families in Coos, Curry and

Douglas counties.

Sincerely,

Kyle Stevens