

Submitter: Emily Plec
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB421

To the Members of the Senate Education Committee,

I am writing to express my support for SB 421 as an educator and citizen of Oregon. The bill is carefully constructed to provide opportunities for youth who are members of historically marginalized and underrepresented minorities to engage in state-level leadership. It is an example of taking action to affirm the importance of having diverse perspectives and identities in our state, and to signal to young people that their voices matter and should be heard. At a time when disenfranchisement from power can turn so many people toward violence, whether that violence is directed at themselves or others, it is refreshing to see Oregon's Senators creating opportunities for this kind of constructive engagement with systems of power. Leadership opportunities have long been available to members of dominant groups. But Oregon's working class kids, LGBTQ youth, and children of color have not had the same opportunities as some of their more privileged peers. The Youth Council does not solve the problems facing youth but it gives highly motivated youth the tools to learn how to problem solve at the collective level throughout their lives. What a great investment in Oregon's future.

Thank you for your consideration of SB 421.
Regards,
Emily Plec