

March 1, 2023

To: House Committee on Education

From: Jadie De Lille Wright, 4th Grade Student Teacher OSU/Greater Albany Public Schools

RE: Support for HB 3178, Teacher Scholars Program expansion

Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs Wright and Hudson and members of the committee—

My name is Jadie De Lille Wright and I am a student teacher at Oregon State University and Greater Albany Public Schools. I appreciate the opportunity to testify to express my support for HB 3178, which will allow Oregon's Teacher Scholars Program a much needed expansion.

I am supportive of this bill because I received a scholarship through the Oregon Teacher Scholars Program and I believe that programs like this are a critical part of the state infrastructure to knock down economic barriers that exist to becoming an educator.

The scholarship has certainly helped me because I would not have been able to go to school to become an educator while having a young son (River is about to turn 4 years old). If I would not have received the Oregon Teacher Scholars Program scholarship I would not have been able to complete the current education program I am about to complete. I have been able to put more effort into my education while maintaining the relationships I have with my family and friends, something that would not have been possible if I would have had to work while trying to balance this busy time in every future educator's life. The level of stress we experience while completing the program is immense and this scholarship was able to take a worry off my plate, I would not have been able to do it without it.

According to a 2022 report release from the Educator Advancement Council, even though the number of teacher, principal and administrator candidates enrolling in Oregon's preparation programs increases, we see a decrease in program completion overall. The report cites that with each milestone towards employment in education, fewer and fewer diverse candidates are present and completing the program— many who do not complete their teacher prep programs say tuition and increasing costs are a barrier. That's why the Teacher Scholars Program is so important.

If we want to meet the challenges of the workforce shortage we have today, we must fully utilize the tools we have for recruitment, like tuition remittance programs, and expand on the idea so we don't leave a single student behind. You have to consider this in two different ways, with the support you would provide to teacher candidates, they would be able to complete the

program. But you also have to consider the number of future students these teacher candidates will impact throughout their teaching career.

In the midst of a workforce crisis, this is a forward-looking solution that centers the bridge between what allows our inspired students in the classroom to envision a path to becoming an educator and a direct benefit to our incoming workforce.

I encourage the committee to support HB 3178. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Jadie De Lille Wright
Bilingual Student Teacher
Oregon State University/Greater Albany Public Schools