



February 28, 2023

Paul Andrews High
Desert ESD

Ben Bergantz, Pacific
Crest Affordable
Housing

Lori Colvin, Healthy
Families of the High
Desert

Caroline Cruz,
Confederated
Tribes of Warm
Springs

Tamara Harris,
FQHC/Mosaic Medical

Leticia Hernandez,
Parent & Diversity Rep.

Amy Howell, COCC

Teresa Martin, The
Children's Learning
Center

April Munks,
Department of Human
Services

Lora Nordquist, Bend-
LaPine School District

Shay Mikkleson,
Jefferson County ESD

Oscar Tatom, Parent

Kristen Tobias,
Pacific Source

Patty Wilson,
NeighborImpact

Ex-Officio Members:

Shannon Lipscomb, OSU
Cascades

Carmen Madrid, COHC

House Committee on Early Childhood
and Human Services

RE: House Bill 2872, Implementation of Oregon Imagination Library Project

Chair Reynolds, Vice Chairs Scharf and Nguyen, and
committee members

I am pleased to submit this letter sharing the impact of Imagination Library to children and families in Central Oregon as you consider House Bill 2872 to establish a statewide project supporting early literacy and educational success for young children.

Imagination Library was launched in Central Oregon in 2018. Regional early childhood service partners and libraries support Imagination Library as a resource to their core mission of supporting families to be their child's first and most important teacher. With local service organization funding, we first offered services to our rural areas where student Kindergarten Readiness skills were reporting lower than state averages. We continue to see books in the home as key to our closing the gaps for our traditionally underserved communities.

We routinely hear from parents who are appreciative and share that their children look forward to discovering a new book each month. Recently, Amber, a mother of three young children shared that seeing the different books received by each of her children has helped her in choosing books and activities that support their reading and learning at each developmental milestone. A resounding testimony of the impact to developing a love and commitment to reading!

Currently, nearly 2,000 children under the age of 5 are receiving monthly books through Imagination Library in Central Oregon, providing the essential resource of books in the home – a key research indicator in the development of early reading skills. While we have been able to implement in our rural areas, HB 2872 would leverage our efforts to support into the more populated areas of Redmond and Bend, assuring that all children have access to books.

The success of Imagination Library in Central Oregon is mirrored in many of the other areas of the state. HB 2872 would link those efforts together to implement a state program model to assure all children have access to books regardless of their income or where they live. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Please contact me if you have questions or would like additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Brenda Comini".

Brenda Comini, Director
Early Learning Hub of Central Oregon