

Submitter: Marlene Iversen

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure: HB2872

To: Chair Reynolds, Vice Chairs Scharf and Nguyen and members of the House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

From: Marlene Iversen, Eugene Oregon

I am writing in support of HB 2872. As a primary elementary teacher for over thirty years I know firsthand the importance of early literacy. Children who have been read to at home, from the get go, have a much better chance of becoming readers themselves and that paves the way for success in school and beyond.

Oregon's high school dropout rate is one of the highest in our nation. Over 30 million adults are considered illiterate in our country. The resulting impact to children and their families includes increased unemployment, illness and poverty. The need for early intervention is glaring.

The Imagination Library program provides a way for children to receive an age appropriate book each month delivered to their home from birth to age five. They can have their own 60 book library by the time they age out of the program! The cost is free to the families, regardless of family income. Dolly Parton foundation makes it possible for the cost per book per child each month to be approximately \$2.30. Now that's a bang for a buck!

Your support of this bill will increase the equitable access to the books/reading for all children in this age group. Matching funds would allow for stabilization and expansion of the program. This is a chance to make a difference in a child's life. I urge you pass HB 2872.

Thank you for your consideration.

Marlene Iversen
Co-Chair Imagination Library Advisory Board
Eugene Public Library