

February 28, 2023



SUPPORT HB 2872- Dolly Parton Imagination Library Funding

Dear Chair Reynolds, Vice Chairs Scharf and Nguyen, and members of the House Committee on Early Childhood and Human Services,

The Coos-Curry Electric Charitable Foundation located in Coos and Curry counties would like to express our strong support for HB 2872, the expansion of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program in Oregon. As an organization dedicated to improving the quality of life for individuals and families in our community, we believe that this program has a significant positive impact on the lives of young children and their families.

The Coos-Curry Electric Charitable Foundation has been helping to provide free age-appropriate books to children from birth to age five in Curry County since 2019. To date, CCECF has 337 active children and 154 graduates of the Imagination Library Program. By expanding this program in Oregon, we can help ensure that all children have access to high-quality books and educational resources that can help them succeed in school and in life.

Research has shown that children exposed to books and reading at an early age are more likely to develop strong language and literacy skills, which can have a significant impact on their future academic success. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) found that children who were read to frequently are also more likely to: count to 20, or higher than those who were not (60% vs. 44%), write their own names (54% vs. 40%), read or pretend to read (77% vs. 57%).

Statewide matching funds will play a critical role in expanding childhood literacy across the state. By leveraging public and private funds, we can maximize the impact of our investment and reach more children and families. Matching funds can also help incentivize community partners and stakeholders to get involved in the program, increasing its reach and impact. Matching funds will help ensure that the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program is sustainable and effective in promoting early literacy and educational equity for all children in our state.

By offering these books to our youngest community members, we are building a stronger, more resilient Oregon. We urge you to consider please support HB 2872 to expand the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program in Oregon and invest in the future of our children and families. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Coos-Curry Electric Charitable Foundation Board of Directors

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