

HB 2717 Testimony
Freckled Fawn Nature School LLC

Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chairs Nguyen and Scharf, and Members of the Committee. Thank you for having me here today.

For the record, my name is Melissa Moore, I live in Sams Valley and operate an outdoor preschool and grade school in Jacksonville Oregon.

Remember what it felt like to run wild as a child? Grass beneath your feet, wind in your hair? Mud under your nails? My children and students do too. Remember exploring nature unbothered? Untimed? Unafraid? My children and students do too.

Freckled Fawn Nature school has opened up opportunities for children of all backgrounds to enter the forest and explore the child within. It has encouraged exploration and wonder, excitement and joy, all without the heavy use of materials and electronics.

Of our 11 communities that make up the Jackson County population our school serves 9. 6 of which are rural communities. Many of these families travel a great distance to have their child attend our school. The furthest being about 35 miles away four days a week. Of the families served in our county, many of them have faced hardships, and are unable to afford programs like ours. Due to the lack of funding provided to recorded programs our school has offered over \$20,000 in scholarships over the last four years we have been open... a number MY family is now feeling the effects of.

By passing HB 2717 this would encourage other providers to branch out, moving outdoors feeling confident that they will be supported financially and educationally and in turn their families as well. This would create opportunities in our "childcare deserts" for example employment and quality care. YOU would be helping pave the path to accessibility and most importantly cultivating a group of changers, thinkers, doers, a people who hold nature dear to their heart.

Your support with this bill will allow Family run schools like ours to reach all students no matter the distance or financial struggle. Creating community, creating change, creating opportunities. This is why I urge you to support HB 2717. Thank you.