

Submitter: Tim Belanger
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB489

Submitter: Tim Belanger, CPA, Business Director
Agency: Oregon Trail School District 46
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I am submitting written testimony in opposition of SB489. This measure would simply add more cost to public schools, to address a perceived economic deficit of employees, without adding any service improvement to students.

Unemployment benefits are intended to bridge an economic loss in the event of unanticipated loss of employment. School employs accept their jobs knowing and anticipating specific unpaid work breaks. If district had meaningful work and funds to pay employees for work during these periods, they would be doing so. However, to be efficient custodians of public funds for the education (not employment) purpose, resources are deployed in other ways to maximize student outcomes.

Most districts direct pay, or reimburse the state, for any unemployment claims paid to their employees or former employees. Adding unemployment payments to staff during scheduled breaks is therefore a district cost to districts. Again, these payments do nothing to contribute to the education outcomes of students and in-fact may result in loss of service at other budget cuts will be required to fund this new cost.