

**DEB PATTERSON
STATE SENATOR/SENADORA ESTATAL
DISTRICT/DISTRITO 10**



OREGON STATE SENATE/SENADO DEL ESTADO DE OREGON

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Weber, and Honorable Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Deb Patterson, State Senator from District 10, which includes South Salem, West Salem, Monmouth, and Independence. I would like to add my support to SB 549, which would provide inflation-adjusted funding for school-based health centers, while providing additional funding for school-based mental health care and selecting ten school districts to receive grants for trauma-informed programs.

School-based health centers are incredibly important for providing students the physical and mental health care they need. Oregon students are particularly struggling with mental health issues and need further support. In 2020, 14.5% of 8th graders and 29.9% of 11th graders in Oregon said that they had emotional or mental health care needs that were unmet due to the pandemic. 42.9% of 11th graders, 33% of 8th graders, and 28.6 % of 6th graders reported having depressive symptoms. This data shows alarmingly large proportions of students struggling with their mental health, highlighting the importance of providing sufficient funding for school-based health centers, and specifically mental health care for students.

Trauma and adverse experiences are common for Oregon students: 17.7% of 11th graders report being coerced into sex, while 29.3% report being physically hurt by an adult. These figures are alarmingly high, demonstrating a need to fund trauma-informed programs. Adopting practices that incorporate awareness and sensitivity around trauma experienced by students is important for student well-being.

This legislation would help schools give students the support they need as they navigate challenges such as depression, trauma, and other mental health issues. I urge your aye vote.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deb Patterson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Deb Patterson