

Submitter: McKenzie Warden-Craig

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education

Measure: HB5014

Hi there,

My name is McKenzie Warden-Craig and I'm writing on behalf of myself and our transition team at Sequoia Falls Academy in Silverton, Oregon. Our program serves students who have disengaged from traditional education and need help navigating barriers to success. We personally utilize the Reengagement Opportunity Grant and the Future Youth Ready Grant; these grants have been integral to the success of our program and have worked to improve the lives of our students and provide them with the supports they so desperately need.

Among some of the things the grant money has provided include, but aren't limited to: driver's permits, driver's licenses, driver's ed courses, various certifications that aid in employability and job skills, equipment for the workplace, work boots and other uniforms, interview clothing, food handlers licenses, and our transition services via our specialists. These specialists, myself included, help students write resumes, apply for jobs, get their permits/licenses, tour colleges and trade schools, apply for postsecondary programs, connect them to Voc Rehab and other community partners--among other things! And, despite the very real and tangible benefits listed above, having a caring and trusted adult help these students navigate the world and it's many multifaceted systems is immeasurable.

These grants are absolutely critical to our students' successes. They do nothing short than change their lives and change their opportunities. These are students who often don't have the support systems at home; they receive that support from their transition specialists and the staff at Sequoia. These are truly our most vulnerable populations and with this work, we are able to shift the trajectory of their lives. Please keep funding this important and crucial undertaking.

Thank you.

McKenzie Warden-Craig
Transition Specialist
Sequoia Falls Academy