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Honorable Representatives Neron & Hudson and members of the Committee:

I volunteer as the Chair of the Regional Governance Team for the SCOELH which serves Douglas, Klamath, Lake Counties. I am writing to urge you to support HB 3198 and a proposed amendment to merge HB 3454 and HB 3198 appropriating funds to the Department of Early Learning and Care for supporting early literacy efforts.

In the rural and frontier counties served by the SCOELH, the Hub is actively supporting community based projects to reach children 0-5 and their families furthest from opportunity. The Hub has identified 250+ pre-kindergarten children located in geographically isolated areas that could participate in summer learning activities within the Hub's 19,761 square miles. Many of the families don't have access to school district provided resources – particularly after school hours and during the summer months.

Providing DELC additional funds to strengthen the Early Childhood Equity Fund and Kindergarten Partnership Innovation Fund will enable the SCOELH to support new and existing early literacy programs including preparing children in the summer before they enter kindergarten. These funds will also expand our efforts to reach families who are challenged by language barriers, transportation barriers, and the unhoused families in our communities.

I encourage you to vote YES on the merged and amended HB's 3454 and 3198.

Sincerely;
Dr. Steve Schenewerk
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