

Submitter: Teresa Smith
On Behalf Of: OSEA
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

With all of the focus on homelessness, drug abuse and other social crises within the state of Oregon, our best investment is in prevention. It is cheaper and more effective to reach children when they are young than to try and fix problems after the fact. By giving children a solid foundation of education, social skills, and a safe environment we can begin to reverse many of our societal ills that are plaguing us now. We need to invest in educators (teachers and all support staff). We need to protect them and eliminate the conditions that are driving them out of their professions. They have had enough. Class sizes will continue to increase, things will worsen, and more staff will leave. And the poverty cycle will continue to perpetuate itself. We love our kids, but we shouldn't have to be martyrs.