



To: Representative Tawna Sanchez and Senator Elizabeth Steiner
Co-Chairs, Joint Committee on Ways & Means
Re: Youth Voice Youth Vote Participatory Budgeting \$1.2 million funding request.

May 3, 2023

Dear Co-Chairs and Ways & Means Committee members,

We, the undersigned individuals and organizations, are writing to request \$1.2 million in funding for a 2nd Cycle of Youth Voice Youth Vote Participatory Budgeting (www.youthpb.org). What is participatory budgeting (PB) and why fund YV² PB?

PB is a deliberative democratic process wherein ordinary people allocate a portion of a public budget- within parameters set by public officials- through a binding vote. PB operationalizes the principle of "nothing about us without us" and has become the fastest spreading form of participatory democracy in the world. Since starting in Brazil in 1989, it has been implemented in over 11,000 municipalities. PB has been adopted across the United States but as of 2021 PB had not come to Oregon.

Youth Voice Youth Vote Participatory Budgeting (YV² PB), is Oregon's first participatory budgeting process. The first cycle was funded in 2021 by Senators Kayse Jama and Chris Gorsek, and Representative Ricki Ruiz with American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds. Youth have been uniquely impacted by the COVID and are vastly underrepresented in government decisions made on their behalf. Through YV² PB, youth leaders are designing and implementing a transparent and equitable PB process to determine how to spend \$500,000 in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds on COVID Relief and recovery. In the process, over 1000 participating young people are expanding their leadership and organizing skills; enhancing and rebuilding community, relationships, and mental health in the wake of the pandemic; and becoming the experts and advocates in public budgeting and PB.

