

Committee Chair, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Angela Valenzuela. I am writing to express my support for House Bill 4082, which seeks to establish the Summer Learning Grant Program in the Oregon Department of Education. As the Program Coordinator for the Chicas Program at Adelante Mujeres, I am particularly excited about the positive impact that this initiative can have on Latina youth in our community.

The Chicas Program at Adelante Mujeres aligns closely with the goals outlined in HB 4082. Through partnerships with school districts, education service districts, Oregon's federally recognized tribes, and community-based organizations, such as ours, the Summer Learning Grant Program can serve as a powerful catalyst for addressing the unique challenges faced by Latina youth in our community.

One of the primary strengths of the Chicas Program is its holistic approach to empowerment. We not only focus on academic achievement but also place a strong emphasis on building self-esteem, leadership skills, and a sense of community among our participants. By addressing the social, emotional, and cultural aspects of their lives, we are better able to prepare these young women for the challenges they may encounter as they navigate their educational and professional journeys.

The impact of the Chicas Program is evident in the success stories of our participants. Many of these young women have gone on to pursue higher education, secure meaningful employment, and become leaders in their communities. The program has not only equipped them with the necessary tools for academic success but has also instilled in them a sense of pride in their cultural heritage and a commitment to giving back to their communities.

Furthermore, by investing in the Chicas Program, we are not only supporting individual students but contributing to the overall well-being and prosperity of our community. Research consistently demonstrates that empowering young women has a multiplier effect, positively influencing families, neighborhoods, and society at large.

In conclusion, I urge you to support House Bill 4082 and recognize the invaluable role of programs like Chicas in shaping the future of our Latina youth. By investing in their education, well-being, and empowerment, we are not only fostering the development of strong, confident individuals but also contributing to the strength and resilience of our community as a whole.

Please vote yes to measure HB 4082!

Thank you for your time and consideration.