

Submitter: Devon Lawson-McCourt
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure: HB4079

Honorable Members of the House Committee On Revenue,

I write to you today to extend my wholehearted support for House Bill 4079, a visionary piece of legislation that promises to usher in a new era of educational equity and inclusivity in our beloved state of Oregon. This bill, poised to take effect on July 1, 2024, is not just a policy change; it is a moral imperative that reflects our collective commitment to fostering an environment where every child, regardless of their circumstances, is afforded the opportunity to thrive.

At the heart of HB4079 lies the profound understanding that our current educational funding system, with its arbitrary caps on state monies for students with disabilities and inadequate support for homeless students, is fundamentally flawed. By removing these caps and providing additional weight for students who are homeless, this bill acknowledges the additional challenges faced by these vulnerable groups and takes bold steps towards addressing them.

Children with disabilities face unique challenges that require specialized support and resources, often far exceeding what our current funding model can accommodate. By allowing school districts to receive more state moneys for these students, HB4079 ensures that the quality of education and support services they receive is not constrained by arbitrary financial limits but is instead tailored to their individual needs.

Similarly, students who are homeless are navigating circumstances that no child should ever have to face, particularly at a time when they should be focusing on their education and personal development. By providing additional funding weight for these students, this bill recognizes the critical importance of giving them not just equal but equitable support, ensuring that they have access to the same educational opportunities as their peers, despite the challenges they face outside the classroom.

In essence, HB4079 is a bold reaffirmation of our belief in the transformative power of education and our responsibility to ensure that this power is accessible to all, regardless of their background, abilities, or socio-economic status. It is a testament to our understanding that investing in our children's education is the most profound investment we can make in our future.

Therefore, I urge you, the esteemed members of the House Committee On Revenue, to support HB4079. Let us come together to dismantle the barriers that prevent our children from reaching their full potential. Let us build a future where every child in

Oregon has the support, resources, and opportunity to succeed. This is our moment to stand on the right side of history, to champion the cause of educational equity, and to ensure that our educational system is a beacon of hope and opportunity for all.

Thank you for considering my testimony on this vital issue.