

Chair Taylor, Vice-chair Bonham, and Members of the Senate Committee on Labor & Business,

The American Federation of Teachers - Oregon (AFT-Oregon) represents over 18,000 members across public education in our state, including classified K-12 staff in Hillsboro, Portland, Scappoose, and John Day. Our labor federation is writing to express our support for Senate Bill 849 and the beneficial relief to school district budgets that repurposing the School District Liability Fund (SDULF) will provide.

The current weight of PERS liabilities has led school districts to make difficult decisions that are impacting our members and communities. Budgetary constraints are felt everywhere - from classrooms receiving less resources, to educators no longer having stable employment. This results in increased staff-to-student ratios and impacts our members' ability to provide the services students need.

SB 849 will give flexibility and new purpose to funds that are currently more restricted. The PERS Board, if this bill passes, can apply SDULF funds with more flexibility and in ways that address the needs of districts, workers, and students. Approximately \$87 million is currently unused due to restrictive statute. SB 849 will help all parties provide stability to school budgets and retain skilled educators.

We urge a Yes vote on SB 849.

Thank you,

Andrea Haverkamp, Ph.D.  
Lead Political and Legislative Organizer  
American Federation of Teachers - Oregon