

Submitter: Nicole Reksopuro
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2729

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Dobson Vice-Chair, Vice-Chair McIntire, and other members of the committee,

My name is Nicole Reksopuro and I am a resident from Happy Valley, Oregon. I approach this committee to provide input not just from the standpoint of a constituent, but as a student.

Schools are a place for students to learn and excel, but without access to resources that help students thrive— like basic healthcare services, how can we ensure our children are physically successful in the real world?

I am one of many individuals who currently has the opportunity to receive accessible, quality healthcare at my school— free of cost. By just getting access to a school-based health center(SBHC), its benefits are evident in not just myself, but the general student body. I speak as someone who receives free mental health resources at my school-based health center, and can affirm that my experience has been nothing but positive. It would not be possible without state-allocated funds and the hardworking individuals who facilitate the center, that I am in such a positive place in my life currently.

According to the Oregon School Based Health Alliance, research on Oregon youth with SBHCs reported significantly lower rates of depression and suicide. Early mental health investments are proven to be critical for preventing and protecting individuals from future mental health disorders and substance abuse— and through SBHCs, youth are able to adequately address these issues. Unfortunately, in the lives of many young Oregonians, particularly those from marginalized backgrounds, face barriers to receiving the care they need— primarily due to a lack of funding and insufficient school-based services. These are typically the individuals who already lack basic living necessities and are in need of these resources the most; which is why as a member of the community, and as a student, I urge legislators to vote YES on HB 2729.

This bill provides a vital opportunity to support current and develop new school-based health centers by approving processes that advocate for increasing the funding for these resources. By investing in school-based health services, we are not only supporting students but also fostering a safer, more inclusive learning environment. I respectfully ask for your support in passing House Bill 2729 to demonstrate your commitment to the health of Oregonians, and ensuring that every student has access to the health resources they deserve. I thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Nicole Reksopuro