

Submitter: Celeste McGowan

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2953

Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Dobson, Vice-Chair McIntire, and Members of the Committee,

First off, thank you for your efforts to ensure every child gets the education and support they deserve in Oregon.

As a concerned parent, I am reaching out to advocate for the passage of HB 2953 and legislation that fully funds special education services.

My hard working family has benefited from special education services helping my sweet, hilarious, and bright toddler gain imperative life skills. Early Intervention, and other targeted therapies help support his social and emotional awareness which has been essential to his development and ability to enjoy life!

I believe that every student in Oregon deserves the support they need. Teachers and staff should be equipped with the resources necessary for every child to succeed. But because of an outdated funding formula designed over 30 years ago, Oregon is currently leaving out over 19,000 students or almost 1/4th of the 80,000 students in its funding. That's even though the need has drastically increased for special education services, with diagnoses for those with autism or anxiety and children with other needs continuing to rise.

Doing nothing means young people not getting basic support for their needs. It means more teachers and staff burnout from not having enough resources. Underfunded mandates mean local schools having to choose cuts in various programs. Doing nothing affects all of us.

As a community member, local business owner, and dedicated mother I am all too aware of the importance of supporting children in my community. ALL of our children belong here. Our funding should reflect this truth.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration,
Celeste McGowan