

Submitter: Rachel Freed  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2976

I am writing to express my opposition to House Bill 2976, which appropriates funds from the General Fund to the Oregon Department of Administrative Services for distribution to nonprofit organizations focused on the interpretation of indigenous languages.

Firstly, the allocation of public funds to nonprofit groups raises questions about transparency and accountability. It is crucial that taxpayers can trust that their contributions are being used effectively and equitably. Without a clear framework for oversight on how these funds will be managed and distributed, we risk creating a system that may not fulfill its intended purpose. The potential for mismanagement or misallocation of resources could undermine the very goal of supporting indigenous language initiatives.

Additionally, while nonprofit organizations can play a vital role in cultural preservation, it is essential to ensure that the voices of indigenous communities themselves are prioritized in this process. The bill does not sufficiently address how these organizations will engage with and include indigenous peoples in decision-making. Without meaningful involvement from the communities most affected, we risk perpetuating a top-down approach that may not align with the needs and priorities of those we aim to support.

Furthermore, I believe that funding should be directed toward comprehensive programs that not only focus on interpretation but also include language education and community engagement initiatives. A more holistic approach could provide greater long-term benefits for indigenous language preservation and revitalization, rather than merely funding interpretation services.

In conclusion, while the intention behind HB 2976 to support indigenous languages is commendable, I urge you to reconsider the approach taken in this bill. It is essential to prioritize accountability, community involvement, and comprehensive strategies that truly reflect the needs of indigenous peoples. I encourage you to advocate for a more thoughtful and inclusive plan that supports the preservation of these vital languages.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I hope you will take my concerns into account as you deliberate on the implications of HB 2976.