

Albina Head Start  
3417 NE 7th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97212



March 14th, 2025

Dear Chair Bowman, Vice-Chair Drazan, Vice-Chair Pham, and members of the House Rules Committee

On behalf of Albina Head Start, I am writing to express my strong support for HB 3595, which seeks to recognize the Lunar New Year as a legal holiday in Oregon. As an organization dedicated to early childhood education and fostering inclusive communities, we believe that recognizing this important cultural celebration will greatly benefit Oregon's diverse population.

Albina Head Start serves families and young children, providing comprehensive early learning programs that embrace the cultural backgrounds of our students and their communities. Many of the families we work with celebrate the Lunar New Year and its recognition as a state holiday would be a meaningful acknowledgment of their heritage and traditions.

Lunar New Year holds deep cultural significance for many Oregonians, with over 130,000 to 180,000 residents participating in the celebrations. The holiday fosters family connections, honors ancestors, and symbolizes renewal and prosperity. Making the Lunar New Year a recognized holiday would validate these traditions and reinforce Oregon's commitment to diversity and inclusion.

Additionally, recognizing Lunar New Year would bring economic benefits to our state. Local businesses, including restaurants, grocery stores, and cultural shops, experience a surge in activity during the holiday season. Festivals and community events draw visitors, stimulate commerce, and contribute to Oregon's economy.

Furthermore, granting public employees and students the day off to celebrate the Lunar New Year would allow families to fully engage in cultural traditions without the constraints of work or school obligations. States such as California, Colorado, New York, New Jersey, and Washington have already recognized Lunar New Year as a state holiday, and Oregon should follow suit in acknowledging this global celebration.

Lunar New Year's recent designation as a UN floating holiday and its inclusion on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity highlight its worldwide significance. By passing HB 3595, Oregon would align with the growing international recognition of this holiday and demonstrate its commitment to cultural appreciation and inclusivity.

I urge you to support HB 3595 and advocate for the legal recognition of the Lunar New Year in Oregon. Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to reach out if you have any questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

Ron Herndon  
Albina Head Start Director