

Submitter:

Barbara Kahl DVM

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB1538

To the Members of the Oregon State Legislature:

I write in strong opposition to Senate Bill 1538 (SB 1538), which prioritizes illegal aliens over American citizens and violates federal law. The bill requires school districts to admit all students regardless of immigration or citizenship status, prohibits discrimination on those grounds, and mandates policies and training to limit immigration enforcement at public schools.

As the bill awaits action in the Senate Education Committee in February 2026, lawmakers must reject it to safeguard our communities, resources, and the rule of law. SB 1538 directly contravenes federal statutes. Under 8 U.S.C. § 1324, it is a crime to harbor or shield undocumented individuals from detection. By forcing schools to admit and accommodate students without regard to legal status and by restricting enforcement on school grounds through Attorney General model policies, the bill turns public schools into sanctuaries for those here illegally.

This encourages further unlawful entry and obstructs federal agencies like ICE. Furthermore, 8 U.S.C. § 1373 bars state and local governments from restricting employees from sharing citizenship or immigration status information with federal authorities. The bill's policies and training requirements defy this, risking costly lawsuits and loss of federal education funding.

The bill also misuses taxpayer resources meant for citizens. Oregon public schools rely on property taxes, state income taxes, and federal grants paid by law-abiding residents who expect benefits for their own children. Mandating unrestricted admission strains already tight budgets, overcrowds classrooms, and diverts support services—like English language programs, counseling, and special education—from legal residents. Amid Oregon's budget challenges, why should families pay higher taxes or accept larger classes to educate those who entered illegally?

This is not compassion; it is an unfair shift of limited resources away from those who follow the law. SB 1538 amounts to political posturing rather than sound education policy. Critics correctly note that it undermines law enforcement cooperation, invites expensive litigation, and creates confusion and risk in schools during heightened federal enforcement. It signals Oregon as a haven for illegal activity, likely worsening overcrowding and service strains.

In short, SB 1538 assaults federal immigration authority, wastes taxpayer dollars, and threatens public education integrity. Vote against this bill. Focus instead on

supporting legal residents, enforcing laws, and responsibly managing Oregon's resources. There are resources in place for illegal immigrants to go home, then come back legally. This bill overrides that opportunity, bringing chaos where education should exist. Our state deserves better than legislation that rewards the very obvious lawbreaking for misplaced ideology at legal citizens' expense. STOP USING CHILDREN AS SHIELDS FOR MISGUIDED INDOCTRINATION TO ILLEGAL ACTIVITY in violation of Federal law.