



Representative Lamar Wise
Oregon House District 48

HB 4149: Codifying McKinney Vento

Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the committee, my name is Representative Lamar Wise of House District 48, which includes outer SE Portland and North Clackamas. I'm proud to be sponsoring HB 4149: not just as policy, but as a real chance to change the lives of kids across Oregon.

In our community, we know what instability looks like. Families living paycheck-to-paycheck, a rental market that pushes people further from home, and children trying to focus on algebra while wondering where they'll sleep tonight. For students experiencing homelessness, school can too often feel like the one thing slipping through the cracks.

HB 4149 helps keep those students connected to the one place where they have structure, support, friends, and the best chance to thrive: their school. It means a student doesn't have to lose a year of learning because they can't prove an address. It means a child won't miss practice with their teammates because they lack a ride. It means every child, whether living doubled-up with family, in a shelter, or moving from place to place, gets a fair shot.

The McKinney-Vento Act is a crucial policy that's helped countless students stay safe, access the support they need, and show up to school. Despite existing federal protections, however, the lack of continuity at the state level leaves room for students to slip through the cracks. HB 4149 seeks to definitively close the gaps by officially codifying these protections into Oregon law: clarifying obligations for districts, improving student stability, and increasing equity in education for some of our most vulnerable students.

We've heard from parents and teachers alike: when a child falls out of school, they fall behind for good. This bill helps keep them in class, keeps them connected to caring adults, and keeps them part of the community we all value.

Our schools should be anchors, places of stability in times of instability. HB 4149 helps make that a reality. I respectfully urge your support and thank you for your consideration.