

Testimony for Claire Morgan before the Joint Rules Committee on SB 822
March 27, 2013

Good afternoon chairs, co-chairs, and members of the State House and Senate Rules Committee.

For the record, my name is Claire Morgan, and I am a Stand for Children member in Hillsboro.

I am here today to share my concerns about Senate Bill 822 introduced by the co-Chairs of the Joint Ways and Means Committee.

My perspective is somewhat unique:

- I am a recipient of Tier I PERS benefits that are 80% of what I earned when I retired after teaching 37 years.
- My sister and daughter-in-law are currently teaching and are stressed trying to do the best for their students under very difficult situations while still having their salaries frozen and reduced by furloughs.
- Hillsboro, the school district from which I retired, will suffer a \$12 million budget shortfall for 2013-14 and \$9 million shortfall in 2014-15 under the \$6.55 billion proposed by SB822.
- My grandson will be in a Hillsboro school in 2 years under these impossible conditions.
- I am in leadership and a member of Stand for Children and a member of Oregon Education Association - Retired. My viewpoint falls somewhere in the middle of these two organizations.

I believe that PERS needs some reforms, but not in this haphazard, emergency fashion. I want a PERS that is fair for all involved! I am willing to sacrifice some of my COLA, now, for the education of the children of Oregon. Who else in this state is willing to sacrifice for the education of Oregon's children, other than State employees?

I think we need to ensure everyone is a part of the solution. There are bills that are on the docket right now - SB 593, 594, 595, and 671 - that will give more tax breaks for corporations and the wealthy! Since the bills haven't moved yet, hopefully, the sponsors are thinking about it.

Senate Bill 822, alone, will not solve the education funding necessary for 2013- 2015. The proposed reforms in SB 822 will not even come close to stopping the cuts that the schools in Hillsboro are facing next school year.

I want to say again, that I believe the legislature should find a solution to this issue, because I believe that with meaningful reforms, we can start down the path to restoring and rejuvenating our schools.

For the children of Oregon, **everyone** needs to help!