

**Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Education Subcommittee**  
**Public Testimony SB 5516, 5517, March 16, 2017**  
**Betty Reynolds, Ph.D.**  
**President Oregon School Boards Association**

Good morning Co-Chairs and members of the Subcommittee. I'm Betty Reynolds, President of the Oregon School Boards Association. I also serve on the West Linn Wilsonville School Board.

After property tax limitation measures in the 1990s, the Legislature showed leadership by stepping in to fill, with the General Fund, what would have been catastrophic gaps in education funding. But as you know, the Oregon budget is more dependent on a personal income tax than any other state. And as a result, since the recession of 2008 we have seen teachers laid off by the thousands, we watched our school year shrink, our class sizes rise, and achievement decline. For example, our graduation rate is one of the lowest in the country.

The proposed budget is far below what the Quality Education Commission identifies as needed, and about \$380 million short of what school business managers across the state have told us we need just to maintain current service levels. In many of the state's 197 school districts, it's a cuts budget.

This issue affects more than 578,000 public school students. Those kids are our future: Oregon's economy is dependent upon a well-educated workforce. Adequate and stable funding is OSBA's top priority this session to assure those kids get the education they deserve.

We're asking that you again show leadership in revenue reform, and ideally, fully fund the Quality Education Model, or at the least, appropriate the \$8.4 billion necessary to avoid widespread cuts in school district education budgets. The OSBA and our education partners are eager to work with you to invest in our young people, to assure Oregon's future.

Thank you.