



Oregon School Employees Association

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February 17, 2017

Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means
General Government Subcommittee

Re: House Bill 5008, Employment Relations Board; Biennium Funding

Members:

As the executive director of the Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA), a public sector union representing more than 20,000 classified employees working in 133 Oregon school districts and community colleges, I would like to express the union's support of Legislature's decision to continue adequate funding of the Employment Relations Board.

The services provided by the Employment Relations Board, mediation and adjudication of labor disputes, must be funded at a level that provides for a timely resolution. If not funded at current levels, an already overburdened and lengthy process would have a direct and negative impact on our members. Simply stated, mediation works. As a result of limited educational funding, reaching an agreement through collective bargaining has become increasingly difficult. As an organization, we have successfully settled numerous collective bargaining agreements as a direct result of mediation. In regard to resolution of labor disputes, a lack of funding would cause significant delays in moving forward with working relationships with the numerous districts we work with statewide.

We have also benefited from the interest based bargaining training and facilitation. With a number of OSEA chapters having taken advantage of this training and facilitation, any limit to access would significantly diminish the benefit the training and facilitation have provided. As a result of the training, we have greatly increased our ability to work collaboratively with the many school districts and community colleges throughout the state. I know of no other interest based training and facilitation that compares to the low cost and expertise provided by the Employment Relations Board staff.

I would like to thank you in advance for your consideration of OSEA's support of funding for the Employment Relations Board. Please contact me at your convenience should you have any questions or need of additional information.

Sincerely,

Rick Shidaker, Executive Director
Oregon School Employees Association

The Oregon School Employees Association (OSEA) is an affiliate of the AFL-CIO, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and the American Association of Classified School Employees (AACSE).