



March 25, 2019

Chair Williamson and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

The Confederation of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) supports House Bill 2562 to allocate funding that will expand the capacity of the Oregon Department of Education to support school districts in appropriately handling complaints related to gender-based harassment, bullying, and assault.

School and district administrators believe that all students, teachers, and school employees should feel safe at school. We know that educators cannot effectively do their jobs and students cannot learn if they are not safe. Our members have seen a dramatic rise in social, emotional, and mental health challenges in their schools and districts over the last several years. In many cases, harassment and bullying, especially of underrepresented groups, is part of this serious problem. We believe that HB 2562 is one component of providing additional supports to school districts to address this challenge.

Unfortunately, the Oregon Department of Education currently does not have the resources necessary to adequately support school districts in dealing with these serious challenges. House Bill 2562 could change that. With these additional resources, the Department could hire at least two full-time Title IX Coordinators that could work with the hundreds of school-based Title IX Coordinators across the state to ensure appropriate protocol is followed when these types of complaints arise. This will help ensure that students and staff are protected and treated fairly at school. Further, the Department would have additional resources to provide training and guidance on bullying and harassment prevention, which our members welcome.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best,

The Confederation of Oregon School Administrators