



April 16, 2019

To: The Joint Committee on Transportation
From: American Federation of Teachers-Oregon
Re: Support of House Bill 2015

Dear Co-Chairs Beyer and McKeown and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the American Federation of Teachers-Oregon, I respectfully request your support for House Bill 2015. AFT-Oregon represents approximately 15,000 Oregon workers in community college and universities in faculty, graduate employee, and classified positions, K-12 classified positions, and child care workers. Our members work hard every day in classrooms throughout Oregon, including schools in Portland, Scappoose, Hillsboro, and John Day. They care deeply about their students, their schools, and their communities. Teachers, professors, and staff are on the frontlines of interacting with students and families on a day-to-day basis, and they are often the first to know when they are struggling.

Across the state, we hear that too many Oregon students are afraid to go to school and participate in activities or are unable to focus in class because they worry that their parents might not be there when they get home. That is because for many undocumented Oregonians, being unable to access a license puts them in an impossible position: either choose to drive without a license and risk arrest and deportation or choose not to drive and be unable to provide for their family. The stress and worry of that daily choice affects all members of an undocumented or mixed-status family and often spills over into the classroom for many students.

We also know that parents who are unable to access a driver's license are barred from volunteering in their child's classroom or going on field trips because they can't qualify for a background check. At a time when resources are so limited and our members are already stretched too thin, schools need all the help they can get, and parents need to be actively involved in their child's education any time they can.

House Bill 2015 would give all Oregonians, including those without legal status, the opportunity to follow the law, get to work and school safely, and provide for their families and communities.

This session, AFT-Oregon members are calling on legislators to make our schools healthier, safer, better places for students and their families, and we urge you to keep in mind that House Bill 2015 is a critical piece of that work by supporting families who are undocumented, experiencing houselessness, or dealing with domestic violence at home. This bill gives Oregon students a better shot at coming to school focused and ready to learn and parents more opportunity to engage in their child's education fully, and that is why we urge your support of House Bill 2015.

Sincerely,

David Rives
President, AFT-Oregon