



**Coalition
for the
Common
Good**

**Testimony to the Joint Committee On Student Success
April 18, 2019**

**John Russell
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Good evening Co-Chairs Roblan, Smith Warner and members of the committee. My name is John Russell. I have developed and own office buildings in downtown Portland.

I am a founding member of the Coalition for the Common Good. We are a coalition of businesses and labor organizations working together to support your efforts because we believe so strongly in the importance of additional revenue for our schools.

My company and I will pay this tax, but I believe that it buys my family and our community real value. Our personal situation is applicable to many Oregonians with children and grandchildren of school age.

We have six grandchildren with our three children. My wife, our three children and I fervently believe in the value of public education. We are all products of public education. Despite this, our older three grandchildren, ranging from seventeen to twelve, are enrolled in private schools because deep disinvestments in their local public schools - as in so many others - increased class sizes, reduced student and teacher support, and cut important programs like art, music, and P.E.

Our younger set of grandchildren, ranging in age from four to eight months, live within walking distance of Sunnyside Elementary School. Our fervent hope is that with the addition of the extra revenue from this bill, their local elementary school will receive the investments it needs, and our youngest grandchildren will be enrolled there.

As you will see tonight, every day more businesses step forward in support of this proposal. The additional revenue you are contemplating will help Oregon continue the tradition of excellence in our public schools.

I thank you for your tireless work in creating this proposal. I urge you to press forward and pass the Student Success Act.