

March 12, 2021

To: Oregon State Legislature- Chairman Dembrow

From: Mindy Wyatt

RE: SB223

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I write to you today with great concern about the direction of the State of Oregon. As we would all agree, this past year has been strange at best. There has been division, destruction and feelings of an uncertain future. I am worried that the actions that you or other representatives of this state may take, will add to the already strained state we are in.

I am today talking specifically about SB223. I believe that trying to force the hand of private and Christian schools to register with the state, by using our children as pawns, is a gross misuse of authority. As a professional State of Oregon employee, I support the entity of government. However, I also believes there is a clear line when it comes to the wellbeing of my children and choices I make as a parent. I believe that my children's education at East Linn Christian Academy far exceeds that of the public schools. I willfully choose to pay the cost of the private school, in addition to paying public school taxes, because of the level of academic education, faith based learning and overall safety they receive. As a parent, that is my choice.

SB26 was passed in 2011, after it was determined that licensing laws only added extra workloads and costs and it did not align with the Oregon Department of Educations goals. In 2019, legislation again was passed to ensure that students were safe. From my understanding of SB223, the overall goal is to promote safety and wellbeing of students. It appears your predecessors and potentially current legislatures have already dealt with these issues and have passed laws to keep our children safe.

By threatening to ban our children from all OSAA sports and interscholastic activities is unfathomable. Children in Oregon have suffered most over the past year by hindering their learning, isolating them from peers, threatening their mental and physical health and missing out on great milestones that are irreplaceable. My three children all participate in OSSA sports, including volleyball, soccer, basketball, track, basketball and baseball. My children should have the same rights to continue to participate in these programs as students attending public schools.

I beg of you today to PLEASE not use my children as pawns to pass this bill. I ask that you vote NO on this bill. My children deserve to continue to receive the very high level of education that I choose to pay for and participate in the same extracurricular activities as the students in public schools. My children are safer in a small private school then a public school, plus they get the faith-based education they are entitled to receive. Our school should not have to increase costs to register with the state.

**Please vote NO on SB223.** Please think of our students for once, before considering this unnecessary bill.

Thank you