



Columbia Gorge
EDUCATION SERVICE DISTRICT

March 25, 2021

Dear Senator Fredrick and Representative McLaine,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony for SB5513 addressing k-12 programs and Grant-in-Aid programs including operations related programs. I would like to address the most vulnerable children we educate in schools.

Regional programs (Regional Inclusive Services) provide a highly valuable set of supports for student, teachers and families who work together to educate students who experience low incidence disabilities. Although often overlooked in state funding efforts, regional programs work in collaboration with Local School Districts, Early Intervention, Early Childhood Special Education (EI/ECSE) programs, Families, and Community Agencies to provide specialized educational support for children with hearing impairments, vision impairments, autism spectrum disorders, orthopedic impairments, deaf-blindness, and traumatic brain injury. These are known as low-incidence disabilities, occurring in the general population at such a low rate that it is difficult for individual districts to employ specialized staff and provide a full range of related services needed for these students. Providing these services on a regional basis is both cost effective and assures that the students receive programs and services from qualified staff related to their specific needs. This program has been chronically underfunded. Yet, for any parent of a child who experience any of the low incidence disabilities these services provide a lifeline allowing their child to fully benefit from public education. This is the reason, I am writing to support an increase of 10 million above the general fund budgeted amount of 30 million for a total of 40 million for Regional Programs (Regional Inclusive Services).

Thank you for your support,

Patricia Sublette, Ph.D.
Superintendent