

Good afternoon, Chair Alonso Leon, Vice Chairs Neron and Weber, and Members of the House Education Committee.

My name is Jonathan Nguyen, a senior at Tigard High School. Additionally, I am the Tigard High School Senior Class President and the Tigard Vice-President of the Tigard Tualatin Student Union. In the past year, I have had the privilege of collaborating with other student leaders, district leaders, and community members to progress our district's equity work: combatting hate speech and discrimination. Throughout the process, we were fortunate enough to have support from the community, but still faced resistance from specific groups, the school district, and school board. Despite the troubles we faced, we were able to pass a Anti-Racist Resolution and Bias Incidents and Anti-Hate Speech Policy which now serves as an example for school districts across the state. Following our work in securing protections for racial minority student-groups, we extended the protections to underrepresented groups such as the LGBTQ+ community. Lastly, through political organizing we were able to pass a policy that amended our district's student health policy, guaranteeing free period products in every female and gender-neutral bathroom in the district's middle and high schools.

The work we accomplished alongside other student leaders stands testament to the power of student voice and the importance of student involvement as the primary stakeholders in the public education system. Yet, across the state we see that Tigard Tualatin School District (TTSD) stands in the minority when it comes to swift action surrounding racial, sexual, and gender equity. So, HB 3363 provides the foundation for a state-wide coalition of involved students, allowing for progress to be made in every school district. Furthermore, this bill empowers underrepresented student groups who experience belittlement as a result of the historical injustices against their respective affinity groups. The separation between TTSD and other school districts is not the specific students involved or their motivations, but rather the opportunity that was afforded to them to affect policy and the decision-making.

I also would like to address the claims that students do not possess the maturity to "correctly" make decisions regarding education policy. I believe that it is irresponsible to assume the intelligence and intentions of students based solely on their age. Although development plays a role, I assert that students possess the capacity to make informed decisions about complicated issues regarding equity policy. Additionally, the concept of student voice is neither divisive or political. Rather, the student voice represents the fundamental right of free speech, serving as a cornerstone in our democratic process; securing the voice of the underrepresented should be considered the bare minimum.

Chair Alonso Leon, Vice Chairs Neron and Weber, and Members of the House Education Committee I urge you to support the approval of this policy as a testament to your responsibility as an elected official, representing all of your constituents, specifically students who stand as the

primary focus of this committee. The advancement of a just and equitable society stands as your moral and ethical obligation as leaders. So, I ask humbly as a student leader and Asian-American that the Members of the House Education Committee would stand with me in supporting HB 3363.