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February 11, 2021

Chair Michael Dembrow
Vice-Chair Chuck Thomsen
Members of the Senate Education Committee

RE: SB 227 – Relating to Ethnic Studies Standards and Professional Learning Opportunities

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Thomsen, and members of the Committee,

FACT Oregon is the US Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, designated Parent Training Information Center (PTI) serving families as they navigate Special Education services. Providing peer delivered support, training, and resources, we equip and empower families of youth experiencing disability to pursue whole, full lives in community.

We ask for your support for SB 227. Community often begins at school so we must ensure our schools are accessible, welcoming, and inclusive places, where diversity is recognized, appreciated, and celebrated. FACT Oregon is grateful for the inclusion of people with disabilities as one of the focal groups identified in the Ethnic Studies Standards. All too often, the impetus for disability awareness is *retroactive* to address bullying. The preparation of educators supported by **SB 227** is a *proactive* investment in real campus culture change. **SB 227** also supports the targeted efforts to address academic disparity and the mental and behavior health of students identified in ORS 327.180 (2)(b), in that accessible, welcoming, and inclusive schools that appreciate diversity *recognize the histories, contributions and perspectives of ethnic minorities and social minorities*, including students experiencing disability, as referenced in HB 2845.

FACT Oregon is glad to partner with Oregon Partners for Education Justice as we raise our collective voice on behalf of students historically victim of systemic bias and racism and appreciate their support of our efforts to address and dismantle ableism.

Thank you for your consideration to this testimony.

Roberta Dunn, FACT Oregon