

Submitter: Sally Compton
On Behalf Of: Think Wild Central Oregon
Committee: Senate Committee On Education
Measure: SB531

Hello, my name is Sally Compton, and I am the executive director of Think Wild. Think Wild is a nonprofit wildlife education and conservation center in Bend, Oregon.

Thanks to summer learning funds, our organization was able to host outdoor, onsite, in class, and offsite k-8 education programming for more than twelve hundred students for free or at low cost. More than 65% of these students were from underserved, rural, and/or indigenous communities in the region. Programs included full day summer camps in Deschutes and Jefferson County, after school wildlife education programs for the Jefferson County School District, and regularly scheduled pollinator garden activities for youth groups.

Specifically, summer funds covered the cost the hiring additional staff, Spanish translation of materials, cost of transportation, and supplies and materials. We are excited to host these programs again in Summer 2023 and are even adding additional summer camps and events. We would greatly appreciate the provision of funds as early as possible so that we can plan more effectively for summer programming capacity.