

Camp Attitude, Oregon  
45829 S. Santiam Hwy.  
P.O. Box 207  
Foster, OR 97345

Senator Dembrow  
900 Court St. NE, S-407  
Salem, OR

Dear Senator Dembrow and Members of the Committee on Education,

My name is Stacy Foster, and I am the Executive Director at Camp Attitude, Oregon. Camp Attitude exists to be a place that enriches the lives of people who experience disabilities through an adapted summer camp program. Families with children who would otherwise be denied an opportunity to go to camp are able to spend one week at our accessible facilities. And, because families who have children with special needs also typically have extreme costs to care for their children, Camp Attitude is offered to all our campers free of charge.

We were happy to be a recipient of Oregon Community Summer grant funds in 2021 and 2022 and are taking this opportunity to share our most sincere support of Senate Bill 531.

We know that Oregon is rich with summer opportunities, but in our community, we see how access to social and physical outdoor opportunities remains inequitable for children who experience physical and cognitive diversities.

Last summer, with funds from the Oregon Community Summer Grant, our program provided 80 children with special needs and their families an opportunity for respite, friendship, and learning through activities like horseback riding, fishing, crafts, adapted sports, and water activities. Camp Attitude has always carried an extensive waitlist of families, and cancellations and volunteer shortages caused by the pandemic has increased those numbers. We know there are kids in our community who do not have access to our enriching program because every year we must tell approximately 100 of them to try again next year.

We know that this is just one example of why it is critically important to support Oregon youth and families with access to meaningful and relevant summer opportunities. Every Oregon youth deserves access to safe, inclusive, and welcoming summer learning environments that will help them become a thriving adult.

To continue our work of reaching children who experience disabilities, sustainable funding and equitable support is imperative. We ask that you please support Senate Bill 531 and get funds into our communities sooner to ensure that we can double our camper numbers in 2023 and beyond.

We would welcome a virtual meeting or program visit for you to hear more about the impact we have seen in young people and throughout our community.

Thank you for your ongoing efforts to support youth and families in Oregon and beyond.

Sincerely,

Stacy Foster and Camp Attitude Board of Directors Dan Whitney (President), Louie Kazemier, Greg Ropp, Tim Walusiak, Elwin Claassen, and Eugene Horvath