

To: Chair Reynolds
Vice Chairs Scharf and Nguyen
Members of the House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

I am Cindy Nelson and I live in Eugene. I am writing in support of HB 2872. I have been aware of the value of the Imagination Library for at least 20 years. I worked for a national family literacy non-profit and watched families benefit from receiving Imagination Library books in their mail boxes each month. Children are so excited to be getting these quality books and parents learn the joy that comes from reading to their children.

Statewide matching funds will allow for the stabilization of existing programs and new programs can be created in unserved areas of Oregon. One of the most exciting elements of the Imagination Library is that the program is available to all children in served areas. Families don't have to fill out a lot of paperwork and do not have to qualify in any way except they must have a child ages birth to 5.

There is a great deal of scientifically-based reading research supporting the importance of parents reading to their children starting at birth. It builds a closeness within families as well as helping children learn vocabulary, story lines, how letters sound, and many more early literacy skills. These skills will prepare them for success in kindergarten and beyond. For adults who were not read to as a child, this is a wonderful experience and opens up a whole new world of books and reading for them.

I am appreciative of this committee for being concerned about the youngest Oregonians and their academic futures. I thank you for supporting HB 2872.

Sincerely,
Cindy Nelson