

Submitter: Elizabeth Durant  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Semiconductors  
Measure: SB4

Good evening Chairs Bynum and Sollman, Vice-Chairs Knopp and Wallan, and Members of the Joint Committee,

My name is Elizabeth Durant, Chair of Parkrose School District Board of Education. As a first-generation mom of two Parkrose students of color, I want to thank you for working to increase career opportunities for the next generation.

Usually when we say “semiconductors,” folks think of Washington County. But here in our urban neighborhood in East Portland, we have an exciting opportunity to provide diverse, low-income students with much-needed technical education and career opportunities.

Our district is 70% students of color, 72% low income. Despite the barriers that our students face, while they are in school in Parkrose they are valued and celebrated for all of who they are: their racial and cultural identities, diverse gender identities, dreams and ambitions, knowledge and skills. Our students are PROUD to live in Parkrose. But when they graduate, our kids leave because what they find outside school is gun violence, houselessness, low-paying jobs and economic neglect...vacant lots like a site just across the street from our high school.

That site is actually the perfect size and location for a semiconductor research and development center. Something like a semiconductor research facility, with classes our students could walk across the street to attend, while they are in high school, that would be phenomenal. It would change the way our low-income, BIPOC students experience the opportunities at home here in East Portland.

Because we are small, the Parkrose School Board has deep connections with our neighbors and business owners. We all know each other, and from talking with my neighbors, I know our community would welcome this kind of economic development.

I noticed that the governor provided \$1m in technical assistance for business owners, and wonder if this is something that could be extended to school districts, to enable a smaller district like Parkrose to be able to participate?

Thank you again for the opportunity to share my support of SB 4 within an urban area like my neighborhood in Parkrose School District.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Durant, Chair  
Parkrose School District #3 Board of Education