

Submitter: Holly Hofkamp

On Behalf Of: Portland

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education

Measure: HB5015

Re: Opposition to HB 5015 as drafted; Advocating for appropriation of at least \$10.3 billion for State School Fund

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and McLain and Members of the Joint Ways and Means Education sub-committee,

My name is Holly Hofkamp. I am a parent of 3 elementary school kids in the Portland Public School District and a family physician who cares for families and children. I'm writing to oppose HB 5015 at its current funding level of \$9.52 billion. As it is currently written, it does not even allocate the minimum amount of funding that public schools need. This is not nearly enough to meet the needs of our students. The Oregon Association of Business Officials have determined that a minimum of \$10.3 billion is necessary to simply maintain the current services including core programs and staffing for our students. In 2022, The Quality Education Commission (QEC) estimates that it will require \$11.889 billion to achieve lasting education gains for all students.

As a mother, it outrages to hear about staffing cuts to our schools year after year and watch our teachers get more and more demoralized. It should not come to a surprise that Oregonian students are amongst the worst in the nation when it comes to reading and math test scores. Next year, my incoming kindergarten is going to be in a class of 28 kids! Our 4th grade classes had 32-25 kids in them last year. How can we expect anyone to excel in these environments? I've heard countless stories of families making the difficult choice to put their kids in private schools because their educational needs are not being met. This further hurts funding of neighborhood schools and leaves those of us sticking in out in public school facing more cuts. Oregonians deserve better.

As a family doctor, I know that investing in early childhood education pays dividends. I care for a high number of low-income families and children, many who have experienced adverse childhood events (ACEs). Positive educational experiences can help combat these adverse experiences and set kids up for healthy development that can have health impacts for the entire life course. Our children are not getting the positive experiences and school-based services they are entitled to with the chronic underfunding of schools that has been taking place for years.

So it is not just an opposition to this bill that I ask of you, but you must also insist that the State School Fund be increased at least to \$10.3 billion. I urge you to consider even more and fund schools to the level of \$11.889 million so that we can finally improve education and equity in our schools.

Sincerely,

Holly Hofkamp