

Good afternoon, Chairman and Members of the Committee.

My name is Maricela Lagos and I live in Northeast Salem. I have been raising 3 children here in Salem for over 22 years.

My oldest son graduated from high school and my other 2 are still enrolled in our local schools.

I am the Coordinator of the Salem/Keizer Coalition for Equality Parent Leadership Group.

From my own experience and that of thousands of Latino mothers and fathers whom I have known over the last 22 years, we have known that the vast majority of our children were always, on average, 1 grade behind in their reading, as they went through the public education system in Oregon.

Latino immigrant parents have been nonstop advocating for 23 years demanding that the Salem-Keizer School District help our thousands of children in kindergarten, first, second, and third grades to read, write, and do grade-level math.

We have always known that all children learn to read between Kindergarten and Third Grade. And in Fourth Grade, they read to learn.

For 23 years we have been praying and hoping that a Proposal like Initiative 3198 would arrive.

Finally, our current Governor, politicians, and the educators and administrators of our public education in Oregon are recognizing that the vast

majority of our low-income, immigrant, and children of color have not had the tools to grow up reading a grade level since their tetes kindergarten

LET'S SUPPORT INITIATIVE 3198 AND IMPROVE EARLY LITERACY