

Submitter: Deian Salazar
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Good legislators of Oregon.

The budget for the next biannuam is as always, critical. But it's time to scrap the idea that this is business as usual. There are people in poverty struggling to stay afloat, there are districts, including my own David Douglas School District, that are underfunded. Workers, people of color, the rural, and tenants are yet to have their due. I request the state to fund BOLI's requested budget by 115% to have resources to spare in tackling exploitative employers, educate youth about their future rights as workers, as well as have additional resources for helping the homeless find employment.

We also need to raise the Corporate Tax from 1.075 Billion in 2022 to 3.225 Billion in 2024, to pay for tripled SNAP benefits for families, double TANF benefits for hard working families to pay for childcare, and increase public knowledge as well as effectiveness of the OERAP.

David Douglas School District is facing a budget crisis, and I strongly request that the Oregon Legislature fund the ODE the full 12.3 Billion necessary to keep on track with the goals of the student success act. My district is one of the most diverse and largest in Oregon. We should not be facing this possible funding issue in a state as progressive and dedicated to education such as Oregon. We need these funds to continue fully funding our afterschool programs, to expand Pre-K for parents and students, for additional funding for the Parent Implementation Model for parents of youth with Autism, to expand the school agricultural education program, to invest in more alternative language materials as well as diverse, well-qualified, well-paid staff to reduce class size, to invest in environmental improvements, to make classes more modern for youth, and so much more.

We also need to fund the foster care system more effectively and have a more efficient mechanism to tackling unsatisfactory or harmful foster parents. Particularly foster youth who are women, people of color, and neurodivergent youth. They're the ones who are most particularly vulnerable to negligence and abuse by adults. Every one of them deserve a fighting chance and the ability to succeed on their own merits, without mental and emotional trauma that hampers their ability to give it their all. Most people talk about meritocracy being used to weed out the ineffective. I take the opposite analysis. It helps find out what coping mechanisms and strategies help people to succeed under immense pressure. We need a system that supports both merit and helps every person reach their full potential, regardless of living situation,

gender, income, ethnicity, culture, religion or life background. It starts at the home and in the education system. Every one of them deserve a well qualified, empathetic, empowering home and school district that help them reach their full potential as well as give them the tools they need to succeed.

I wouldn't be where I am today, as a active member of the community able to partake in helping my community, if not for both David Douglas School District, the fostercare system, and TANF. I recognize Welfare is somewhat of a taboo subject even in today's environment, but I urge you all to seriously consider the plight of the worker, the family, the poor, the single mother, and the hard working person of color. Welfare and education funding have never been hand-outs, but a hand up to those who need it most, to empower them to take their destiny in their own hands and pursue their dreams, becoming a valued member of society.

That is what I urge you all to focus on in the budget for the next two years. The plight of the homeless, the small business owner, and the climate each deserve vast attention, yet that is through legislation that is not the budget legislation, and I don't have enough time to integrate them here.

Thank you legislators, and I look forward to seeing the budget negotiations play out, because I believe in Oregon's future and all of you.