

Submitter: Eleanor Chin
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure: SB5506

Dear Joint Ways & Means Committee of Oregon,

I urge you to invest in our communities now instead of putting more money into reserves.

The Budget Framework currently leaves out critical community-centered investments and policies that Oregonians need now. With historic levels saved—over \$2 billion—we have the means to rise to the challenges of the day.

We need investments in education, mental health, and child care. Access to children's mental and behavioral health services in Oregon is among the worst in the country. The People's Budget put forward by the Fair Shot Campaign, Family Forward, and other organizations lobbying for a just, equitable future for all Oregonians provides a comprehensive list of the priorities we should be investing in as a state. Without investments in school, fair pay for teachers, and education priorities safe from interference from radical extremists, we cannot expect a health workforce for the future. And without investments in child care we cannot expect engaged, functional workers to be retained in jobs in all sectors.

Oregon families cannot wait any longer for investments in our communities and in the future of our state. We must prepare now for any future economic downturn by investing in what gives our communities the opportunity to thrive and reduce demand for services in the future.

Sincerely,
Eleanor Chin