

Submitter: Kelley Albrecht  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure: HB4161

Dear Representatives,

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony.

HB 4161 is another attempt to further weaken our public schools by reducing student enrollment. While there may be a few special cases where students--especially in rural settings--may need to attend school online, the current system provides means for these students to transfer out of district. Far more concerning is HB 4161's creation of accounts where families can take our tax dollars out of our collective system and use them for private schools. This would be a disaster for public education, which has already faced declining enrollment during the pandemic. Instead, we need to work to bring kids back into an excellent, fully-funded school system.

K-12 education funding in Oregon has never met the Quality Education Model's recommendations in the almost quarter of a century since the Quality Education Commission's inception, falling short by around 25% in most years. Since Measure 5 and 50 shifted the onus of funding to the State, we have yet to truly take on the full fiscal responsibility of ensuring quality education for our children.

We need to move towards fully-funded schools as a top priority in strengthening our society in Oregon. Please place HB 4161 in the recycling bin where it belongs, and instead give Oregonians a vote on a constitutional amendment that supersedes the Kicker and mandates K-12 schools be funded at the QEM level every biennium.