

Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Donovan Scribes and I am the co-founder and project director of The Kidz Outside, a growing effort to reimagine George Park. I am urging you to pass the funding request for \$750,000 to improve safety and access at George Park in Portland's St. Johns neighborhood.

By passing this with SB 5701, you promote a more equitable Oregon.

George Park is within walking distance of 4 schools in the neighborhood, but despite it being centrally located in an area with a lot of youth and families, this 2-acre green space severely lacks infrastructure that would promote more positive usage of the space. Students at Roosevelt High School and George Middle School pass this park every day on the way to-and-from school and it has been deemed a priority route through Portland Bureau of Transportation's Safe Routes to School Program.

I am a fourth generational Portlander, but I am not from the St John's neighborhood. I have been compelled however, to bring forward change that is guided by and for this community which is one of the most unique places in the Pacific NW. For more than a decade, as journalist, writer and directing civic projects in my state I have documented, researched and combatted the impacts of gentrification. St. John's is gentrifying, and quickly. This effort, however is a shining example of how community voice can guide a development from the ground up and be the force behind what change happens in a neighborhood. This is what empowered community change should look like.

St Johns is one of the most diverse neighborhoods in Oregon. For 5 years our community has been submitting input on building a new future for this forgotten park. It has often been one of the most overlooked areas in the state. These investments will bring more life into St. Johns, and set a foundation for a more joyful and more connected North Portland for decades to come.

Thank you,

Donovan Scribes