

Submitter: Patricia Winter

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Early Childhood and Human Services

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2811

To members of the Early Childhood and Human Services Committee:

I fully support the efforts of the State of Oregon to make the Imagination Library available to more Oregon children. As an avid reader and the daughter of a librarian, I have seen first-hand over my lifetime the value of a solid reading foundation. I moved to Oregon just under two years ago from a county that has nearly half the population of this entire state. I was delighted to find that despite the obvious budget differences, my new local library services are outstanding. I take that as a testament to the commitment of Oregonians to provide free reading materials to all who want them.

And this is an especially important time to help children learn to read, and to enjoy reading. Just today (1/29/25), the New York Times ran a story entitled, "American Children's Reading Skills Reach New Lows." We truly do have an emergency, so I am pleased to see that HB 2811, if passed by the Oregon State Legislature and signed by the Governor, will take effect quickly.

The Imagination Library has been providing free books to children for 30 years. Its founder, Dolly Parton, has truly given a great gift to her country. The DPIL was not active where I used to live (although I believe that's changing), so I was delighted to learn about it when I moved to Oregon. Passing this bill will not only help individual children, it will also help create a more educated and informed citizenry, and we will all benefit from that.

Thank you for your consideration.