



## The Dollywood Foundation

111 East Main Street

Sevierville, TN 37862

ImaginationLibrary.com

Dear Chair Hartman, Vice Chairs Nguyen and Scharf and House Early Childhood and Human Services Committee Members

On behalf of The Dollywood Foundation, home of Dolly Parton's Imagination Library, I am writing to express our enthusiastic support for legislation establishing a statewide Imagination Library program in Oregon. This transformative initiative has the potential to significantly impact the lives of children and families across the state by fostering a lifelong love of reading, enhancing early childhood development, and addressing barriers to literacy access.

Since its inception in 1995, Dolly Parton's Imagination Library has delivered more than 264 million free, high-quality books to children from birth to age five, regardless of income. Our mission is simple: to inspire a love of reading and learning in children during the most critical years of brain development. Research shows that children who grow up with books in the home are more likely to succeed academically, socially, and economically. By partnering with communities, states, and nations, the program has proven its ability to increase kindergarten readiness, improve literacy rates, and promote family engagement in learning.

In Oregon, a statewide Imagination Library program would not only enrich children's lives but also support parents, educators, and communities. Access to free books levels the playing field for all children, ensuring that rural, underserved, and economically disadvantaged families have the same opportunities as others.

The investment in early literacy will yield significant long-term returns. Studies confirm that children who participate in programs like the Imagination Library enter school better prepared to learn, demonstrate improved reading proficiency, and are more likely to graduate and contribute positively to their communities. By establishing a statewide program, Oregon has the opportunity to ensure that every child is equipped with the tools they need to thrive, no matter their zip code.

We at Dolly Parton's Imagination Library are committed to partnering with Oregon to make this vision a reality. By implementing this program statewide, your leadership will leave a legacy that supports children, strengthens families, and fosters a brighter future for the state. We stand ready to collaborate with legislators, local organizations, and community leaders to provide the resources and expertise necessary for success.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. Together, we can create an Oregon where every child has the chance to dream, grow, and succeed through the power of books.

My best,  
Pam Hunsaker, Senior Advisor