

## Testimony in Support of SB 896 by BB 360

Senator Anderson, Chair Neron and Members of the Senate Education Committee,

BB-360 is a community based organization that operates overnight and day camps in several Oregon locations, as well as a host of year round programs designed to improve the lives of children and families in the communities where we operate.

We are strongly in favor of SB 896, in particular those sections which allow CBOs to participate fully in the after school and summer learning programs.

Among our many programs, we are most proud of the work we have done feeding school children and fire victims in Lincoln County during the early 2020s as our state grappled with Covid and wildfires. Along with serving over 350,000 meals in Lincoln and Tillamook counties, we also run a free statewide reading program, youth groups and leadership programs for teens, family camps and specialized camps that bring together kids across the state facing difficult challenges like having a parent or loved one with cancer.

BB Camp at Devil's Lake in Sen. Anderson's district is also one of the only 100% ADA accessible camps not just in Oregon, but the US.

In our 100-plus year history we have provided hundreds of thousands of dollars in scholarship funds to make sure that our camp is affordable and we remain one of the least expensive overnight camps in the entire country. In 2023 alone, we provided just shy of \$250,000 in scholarship money to needy kids and families.

During Covid we were actively involved in helping distribute both state and federal funds to CBOs and camps across Oregon. Well over 100 organizations received funds through these distributions and you have heard reports from groups including Oregon Asks on how these dollars helped organizations serving kids survive during the pandemic.

We were able to distribute those dollars quickly and monitor them effectively through our fiscal agent the YMCA of Oregon. Through Oregon Asks, the Alliance for Oregon Camps and our fiscal agent, we monitored those dollars and presented a wealth of compelling information that shows how those dollars were invested wisely in children all across Oregon. A second round of funding was equally successful in providing much needed funds directly to the CBOs.

Last year, when the state approved more dollars for afterschool and summer learning, it was with the caveat that CBOs like ours, despite the fact we work all over the state, had to find a school district or ESD as a partner. Regrettably, our CBO, as well as many other deserving non-profits, were unable to receive any dollars through this program.

### Powering your favorite experiences



So we are gratified to see Senator Anderson and this Senate Education Committee take up this issue and we encourage adoption of SB 896's provisions that a portion of these funds be set aside for CBOs that are actively working every day to aid our children and improve their learning experiences.

We are far more than a place where kids can hang out and have fun in the summer. Our mission is to provide experiences, training and tools for children of all ages. We partner with local organizations, including the Lincoln County School District to fight hunger insecurity and provide fresh, healthy meals for children and families at risk.

I have attached our most recent impact report which shows some of the programs we offer, the number of participants and the breadth of our work in the communities where we operate.

The dollars we received during the pandemic were critical in helping us weather nearly two years of shutdown. The dollars we can receive through this summer learning program will be equally well spent in improving the lives and the outcomes of Oregon children.

We thank you for your support of SB 896.

Respectfully submitted by  
Geoff Sugerman, Co-President of BB-360

