



**BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**  
OF THE ROGUE VALLEY

Senate Committee on Education

Senate Bill 896: Testimony in Support of Afterschool Learning and Enrichment Grant Program

Dear Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of **Boys & Girls Clubs of the Rogue Valley**, I urge you to support funding for afterschool learning and enrichment grants. Every day, we see firsthand the critical role that afterschool programs play in the lives of young people and their families.

Across our communities in Grants Pass, Cave Junction, Talent, and Phoenix, our Clubs provide a safe, supportive place for kids when the school day ends. Here, youth build leadership skills, practice decision-making, and develop a strong sense of responsibility to their community. The impact is real—84% of our members believe they can make a difference in their community, and 90% feel empowered to stand up for what they believe in, even if their friends disagree.

Afterschool programs do more than keep kids safe—they provide the relationships and opportunities that help them thrive. At Boys & Girls Clubs, caring mentors, enriching activities, and a strong sense of belonging create an environment where young people can grow. In fact, 99% of our members report feeling emotionally safe in our programs—a foundation that allows them to build confidence, develop essential life skills, and stay engaged in learning.

Through programs like Torch Club and Keystone Club, dozens of middle and high school students are actively involved in service, leadership and valuable life and workforce readiness programs. But too many young people, especially those from low-income households, miss out on these opportunities due to financial barriers. **State funding would help ensure more youth have access to the enrichment and mentorship that set them on a path to success.**

As a longstanding partner in Southern Oregon communities, we also recognize the challenges that come with short-term funding. Scarcity mindsets and systemic barriers make it difficult to plan for the long term and build sustainable, high-quality programs. We appreciate the effort to invest directly in community organizations, strengthening our ability to provide consistent, comprehensive afterschool and summer programs for the youth who need them most.

Thank you for your commitment to the education and well-being of Oregon's young people. We appreciate your consideration and your support of afterschool programs that change lives.

Sincerely,

Jessica King  
Chief Executive Officer  
Boys & Girls Clubs of the Rogue Valley

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