

Submitter: Danielle Jones

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce  
Development

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3053

I am writing in strong support of HB 3053, which would provide funding to the University of Oregon for a pilot program training graduate students to serve children with augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) needs in a traditional overnight summer camp setting.

As a speech-language pathologist of over ten years and current University of Oregon PhD student, I have seen firsthand the profound impact of equipping children and their families with the tools and support needed to enhance communication and social connection when speech is not an option due to developmental conditions. Each year, the University of Oregon graduates approximately 30 students who are licensed to work with this population, and this grant would allow the program to provide them with hands-on, evidence-based training in best practices for AAC intervention. Many of our students are from Oregon and after graduation, these students go back to their communities all around the state to serve Oregonian families. By providing this opportunity, we are ensuring our communities receive the best, most highly trained speech-language pathologists in the future.

With the University of Oregon's Communication Disorders and Sciences department's existing scholarship and expertise in this area, additional funding would allow faculty and staff to maximize resources and fully prepare graduate students to serve this population effectively. Investing in training for future practitioners has an exponential impact, as each of these students will go on to support individuals who rely on alternative communication methods, many of whom are part of our Oregon community.

I urge you to vote in support of HB 3053.