



Chair Neron, Vice-Chairs McIntire and Dobson, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Cynthia Branger Muñoz, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Oregon Education Association (OEA), representing more than 41,000 educators and education service professionals across the state, spanning pre-K through our community colleges. Our members include teachers, bus drivers, custodians, teacher assistants, nutrition specialists, community college faculty and staff, and many others who work tirelessly to support Oregon's students.

OEA strongly supports HB 3200, which would expand funding for a proven and successful program that helps future educators pursue careers in teaching.

For years, this scholarship program has supported aspiring teachers who reflect the rich linguistic and cultural diversity of Oregon's student population. When we talk about linguistically and culturally diverse educators, we mean teachers who can connect with students in meaningful ways—whether through language, lived experience, or deep understanding of different cultures. This is not about race; it is about ensuring that all students have teachers who understand their backgrounds and needs, helping them succeed in school and beyond.

Since 2018, this program has awarded \$6,885,014 in scholarships to 838 future educators. The funding has grown alongside the need, with award amounts increasing from \$5,000 per recipient in 2018 to \$12,000 per recipient in 2023. The impact of this program is clear: it is preparing more teachers who can engage students effectively, strengthen classroom learning, and help address Oregon's ongoing educator shortage.

HB 3200 would increase total funding from \$5 million to \$10 million, allowing even more future educators to benefit from this critical program. Oregon needs a strong and well-supported teacher workforce, and this investment directly supports that goal.

On behalf of OEA and the educators we represent, I urge you to support HB 3200 and continue investing in the future of our schools and students. Thank you for your time and consideration.