

Submitter: Stephanie De Anda

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce
Development

Measure, Appointment or
Topic: HB3053

Dear Members of House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce
Development:

I write this message urging you to vote in favor of HB 3053. Funds support the University of Oregon to deliver a program serving children with augmentative and alternative communication needs in a traditional overnight summer camp setting. Moreover, the program will provide a training environment for University of Oregon students, supporting a future skilled workforce of practitioners who are prepared to meet the needs of children who use augmentative or alternative communication modes. I am the current director of the Communication Disorders and Sciences Program at the University of Oregon and can attest to our ability to maximize the impact of this pilot program. There exist decades of expertise serving children with alternative or augmentative communication needs and preparing students across our faculty, and we are prepared to maximize the impact of the pilot program for children, families, and student trainees who will serve more children and families in the future. Though our program graduates approximately 30 students each year who are some of the top practitioners in the state, the opportunity to provide rigorous training in augmentative and alternative communication in a traditional camp context cannot be understated. In addition, I am an Associate Professor of Communication Disorders and Science and research scientist at the University of Oregon and have published over 20 peer-reviewed studies funded largely through the National Institutes of Health on the topic of child communication development. As an expert and as a licensed speech-language pathologist, I can confirm the program includes evidence-based approaches that are known to be effective in supporting children and families to support healthy communication and language learning. This is a critical time in the federal landscape where continued funding to support children with communication differences, delays, and disabilities is uncertain. Voting in support of HB 3053 affirms our commitment the children of Oregon and their ability to communicate.

Stephanie De Anda, PhD, CCC-SLP