

Subject: Written Testimony in Support of House Bill 2953

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2953. As a parent of a child with an Individualized Education Program (IEP), I know firsthand the challenges and barriers that families like mine face in ensuring our children receive the services and support they need to thrive in school.

House Bill 2953 is a crucial step toward improving special education services by improving access to IEP services, increasing funding for vital positions in order to serve IEP related needs of students, increasing transparency in the process, and providing additional resources for students with disabilities- every year we have seen an increase in eligibility and student need, and funding has not met this need.

Too often, parents find themselves navigating a complex and overwhelming system while advocating for their child's right to a free and appropriate public education. This bill will help ensure that children with disabilities receive the timely, individualized, and equitable support they deserve, and make the experience of all students better by decreasing stress of staff and teachers.

For my family, the IEP process has been both essential and, at times, frustrating. While my child's educators and specialists work hard to provide appropriate interventions, systemic challenges—such as delays in evaluations, lack of access to appropriate staff, and overwhelming need in our district without adequate staffing—have made it difficult to secure the necessary support.

House Bill 2953 would provide financial resources that would dramatically change the amount of services available that would make a real difference in my child's (and many others) educational experience.

By passing this bill, Oregon has the opportunity to demonstrate a commitment to inclusion, equity, and success for all students, regardless of their abilities. I urge you to vote in favor of House Bill 2953 and advocate for policies that strengthen special education services for students with disabilities.

Thank you for your time and dedication to Oregon's students. I appreciate your consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Wagner