

Submitter: Virginia Feldman  
On Behalf Of: Sacred Organizing Coalition  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2953

Dear Chair Neron & House Committee on Education:

As a pediatrician, and present grandparent of 2 Portland Public School children, I thank you for your ongoing commitment to making sure every child in Oregon gets the education & support they deserve. Please pass HB 2953, plus any legislation that fully funds special ed. services. My daughter, who went on to become a Spec Ed teacher in Clackamas, was herself in deep need of special ed elementary school. So I KNOW how much it matters to future success, since before she got services, she wasn't even passing. Now she has a Masters from Columbia! Now? Because of an outdated funding formula of 30 years ago, Oregon currently leaves out over 19,000 students, almost 1/4th of the 80,000 needy students. In our state--in all of the USA-- there are drastically increased needs from the increased diagnoses of autism and anxiety in our kids.

Doing nothing means our young people won't get support for their needs; more teachers & staff burnout from not having enough resources. Underfunded mandates mean local schools having to choose cuts in other good programs. Doing nothing affects all of us.

As a pediatrician I can give you hundreds of stories of how special ed was the answer to so many children's sad loss of accomplishment, or even staying in school.

Please don't let an old law dictate whose children get to belong in Oregon schools. thanks, Dr Ginny Feldman MD, FAAP