

Submitter: Kirsten Carr  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: House Committee On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2953

My name is Dr. Kirsten Carr, and I am writing to express my strong support for HB4923. As a parent and a practicing physician, I have a deep understanding of the critical role that special education services play in the development and success of children with disabilities. I also recognize the significant challenges faced by our local school districts in providing these essential services. One of the most pressing issues is the state-imposed cap on special education funding, which I believe needs to be removed to ensure equitable and adequate resources for every child in Oregon.

The current funding cap for special education services in Oregon places an unfair and unsustainable burden on local school districts. Many districts are forced to divert precious resources away from other educational priorities or take on additional financial obligations to meet the needs of students with disabilities. This funding shortfall leads to inequities in access to services, delays in interventions, and in some cases, limits the ability of schools to provide the quality of education that all students deserve.

As a physician, I am acutely aware of the broad impact that early intervention and tailored educational support can have on a child's overall health and well-being. For students with disabilities, these services are not a luxury—they are a necessity. When the state's funding for special education is capped, it undermines the ability of local districts to meet these critical needs and jeopardizes the long-term success of students. The cap on funding is a direct barrier to providing children with the opportunities they deserve to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

As a parent, I am also concerned about the inequities that result from this funding cap. School districts with fewer resources or those serving higher populations of students with disabilities are disproportionately impacted. This exacerbates the existing disparities in education and perpetuates a system where some students receive far less support than others. The consequences of this gap in funding are far-reaching and affect not just the students who are under-served but also the broader community, which ultimately bears the cost of those unmet needs.

HB4923 is a critical step in addressing these disparities by removing the funding cap. By doing so, we can ensure that every child, regardless of where they live or the resources of their local district, has access to the services they are entitled to under the law. The state has a responsibility to ensure that all students with disabilities receive a free and appropriate public education, and removing the funding cap is a necessary step to fulfill that responsibility.

As a physician and a parent, I understand the long-term societal benefits of adequately supporting special education. Students who receive the services they need are more likely to succeed academically and socially, and this success leads to greater opportunities and a more productive, healthier society. It is in all of our best interests to provide these students with the resources they need to succeed, and that begins with ensuring that school districts are not constrained by an arbitrary cap on funding.

I urge you to support HB4923 and remove the cap on special education funding. It is time for the state to meet its responsibility and ensure that every child in Oregon has access to the educational resources they need to succeed, regardless of the district they live in.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kirsten Carr, MD  
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