

**DEB PATTERSON
STATE SENATOR/SENADORA ESTATAL
DISTRICT 10/DISTRITO 10**



OREGON STATE SENATE/SENADO DEL ESTADO DE OREGON

February 17, 2025

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

My name is Deb Patterson, and I am the State Senator for District 10, which includes South Salem, West Salem, Monmouth, and Independence. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2953.

Oregon state law currently limits school districts' special education funding to 11% of students in the district. Since the cap was created in 1991, it has become clear that the need is much higher than that—however, the funding for special education has not kept up with this need.

As a State Senator, I meet regularly with other local leaders in my community, including our school superintendents, and they have raised this as a critical issue for the schools in my district. 18% of students at Salem-Keizer School District and 14% of students at Central School District receive special education services. However, special education funding is capped at 11%, creating significant financial challenges.

HB 2953 would remove the cap special education funding and ensure educators have the resources to serve all students with special needs. I respectfully ask for your support of this measure.

Thank you for your consideration,

Deb Patterson