

Oral Testimony for HB 2448 / High-Cost Disability Fund

Good afternoon, Chair Courtney Neron, Vice Chairs April Dobson and Emily McIntire, and members of the Education Committee. My name is Robin Jolin, and I serve on the La Grande School District Board, where I have been a board member for 2 years.

I am here today in support of HB 2448, and I would like to thank the sponsors of this bill for prioritizing support for students with high-cost disabilities across Oregon.

In La Grande, we have significantly invested in programs for students with high-cost disabilities, demonstrating our commitment and the critical need for additional funding. We have established a Life Skills and Autism building at our middle school, which provides specialized support for our students with the highest needs.

To ensure quality education and safety, we maintain a crucial staffing ratio of:

- 1 teacher for every 12 students
- 3 paraprofessionals per classroom
- This creates an effective 1:3 staff-to-student ratio

However, these essential programs face significant challenges:

- Our special education needs have increased by 35%
- Federal IDEA funding is at risk of being eliminated
- High-cost disabilities require extensive support, including specialized staffing, assistive technology, and individualized services

Students with high-cost disabilities require:

- Specialized facilities and equipment
- Highly trained staff
- Individualized support services
- Assistive technology
- Specialized transportation

Our district is committed to serving these students. Still, without full funding through the High-Cost Disability Fund, we struggle to meet their unique needs while maintaining appropriate support for all students.

I urge your YES vote on HB 2448 to ensure students with high-cost disabilities receive the resources they need to succeed.

Thank you for allowing me to provide testimony. I am happy to answer any questions.



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