

**2024-2025
YOUTH
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February 26, 2025
RE: Oregon HB 3199 (2025) Omnibus

Chair Neron, Vice-Chair Dobson, Vice Chair McIntire, and Members of the House Education Committee:

My name is McKenzie Vo. I am a commissioner on the Multnomah Youth Commission and Co-Chair of the Education Subcommittee on MYC.

The Multnomah Youth Commission is the official youth policy body for the City of Portland and Multnomah County. On February 20, 2025, the commission voted unanimously to support this House Bill 3199. We stand with the efforts to combat chronic absenteeism in Oregon.

Chronic absenteeism has been a pervasive issue in our state for years. MYC Commissioners have witnessed firsthand the problem in their schools. Today, many students are facing various barriers that make it hard for us to go to school on time and ready to learn. One of the biggest challenges is the lack of an incentive for students to go to school. This is due to a variety of factors, including a feeling of not belonging in class, pressures at home, or a lack of institutional support.

House Bill 3199 provides the necessary framework and infrastructure for the state to begin tackling this issue. By drawing from resources with L-PRO and the Department of Education, HB 3199 finds pragmatic solutions to the problem of chronic absenteeism. An issue such as this one requires creative problem solving and making large steps towards fact-based, tried-and-tested, Oregon-wide solutions. Levering state resources to find these solutions is an important first step that MYC Commissioners support.

We are encouraged by the systematic approach HB 3199 takes to laying the framework for a long-lasting solution to the decades-old issue of chronic absenteeism in Oregon. While the challenges of chronic absenteeism cannot be attributed to any one reason, we believe that the legislature must take creative and decisive action to begin solving this issue on behalf of students. We are grateful that the legislature values youth voices when considering initiatives that directly impact youth, and we trust that the House Education Committee will continue to center the lived experience of youth during the 2025 session.

On behalf of the youth of the City of Portland, and Multnomah County, we urge you to support House Bill 3199, for the benefit of all Oregon students.

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