

Submitter: Sarah Buckmaster

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means and Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education

Date: March 27, 2025

Measure: SB 5516

Joint Committee On Ways and Means and Subcommittee on Education,

My name is Sarah Buckmaster, and I am a parent of three children in Portland public schools. I am testifying in support of SB 5516 because our schools need stable, adequate funding.

However, I urge the Legislature to increase the State School Fund to fully meet student needs.

The Governor's proposed \$11.36 billion for the State School Fund is an increase, but it does not cover the actual costs of operating Oregon's schools. Portland Public Schools alone faces a \$40 million budget shortfall, leading to 220 teacher and staff layoffs. Other districts across the state will experience larger class sizes, fewer resources, and increased strain on educators. The Quality Education Model recommends at least \$2.25 billion more for schools to meet state education goals.

Underfunding directly harms students and communities. Larger class sizes mean less one-on-one attention for students. Staff layoffs impact school safety, extracurricular programs, and special education services. Inadequate funding leads to increased learning disparities, especially for low-income, rural, and special needs students.

Oregon cannot continue to underfund education while expecting better student outcomes. I urge you to increase the State School Fund allocation beyond \$11.36 billion to prevent harmful cuts. Prioritizing K-12 funding at levels that ensure all students receive a quality education is essential to our state's future.

Oregon's students deserve better than a bare-minimum budget. I appreciate your consideration and urge you to fully fund our schools.

Sincerely,

Sarah Buckmaster

PPS Parent, and Community Advocate

NE Portland, OR