

Submitter: Laura Sutherland  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee  
On Education  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5515

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Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Education,

I am writing to express my support for the Senate Bill 5515, and to urge your support as well. At the same time, I'm urging you, as a mother with a child in the Portland Public School system, to bring the proper levels of funding to children across Oregon — not just those in metro areas — who have autism, blindness, and other low-incidence disabilities.

In Portland, at my child's elementary school that happens to be just under the threshold for Title 1 funding, it is clear to me that Oregon's special education services in our public schools are painfully underfunded. Which makes me wonder: how well are we serving our children in rural areas?

I support this bill. This funding will make a huge difference, but I want to express that the funding proposed falls well short of what is needed to serve the special education needs of our state. The 11% cap is arbitrary, and our legislature should fully fund our schools.

I respectfully ask for your support to not only fund support for special education in Oregon schools, but raise the bar — especially as we face the prospect of losing federal funding altogether.

Sincerely,

Laura Sutherland  
Portland, Or