

March 19, 2025

Chair Courtney Neron

Vice-Chair Emily McIntire

Vice-Chair April Dobson

Members of the House Education Committee

RE: Opposition to HB 2007 – Protecting Afterschool Programs for Oregon Youth

Dear Chair Neron, Vice-Chair McIntire, Vice-Chair Dobson, and members of the House Education Committee,

My name is Viviana Ortiz, and I serve as the Chicas Family Support Facilitator at Adelante Mujeres. I am writing to express my deep concern regarding HB 2007 and to urge you to vote against this bill in its current form.

As someone who works directly with families and youth every day, I have witnessed the vital role afterschool programs play in the education, mental health, and personal development of our students. Cutting funding from these programs does not align with the promise to support the growth and success of the young people in our communities. We hear again and again from our elected officials that they are committed to our youth, yet proposals like HB 2007 send a conflicting message.

By limiting support to summer literacy initiatives alone, HB 2007 disregards the holistic needs of Oregon students, especially those from underserved communities. Our youth are facing real struggles, and we, as community members and educators, see firsthand how enrichment programs provide safe spaces, mentorship, and learning opportunities beyond the classroom.

In my role as Family Support Facilitator, I have had the privilege of speaking to hundreds of parents. I can confidently say that our community does not support this bill. Parents consistently express that programs like Chicas are essential to their children's social-emotional development, leadership skills, academic success, and sense of belonging.

Afterschool programs are a critical extension of the school day and provide students with experiences that prepare them to thrive both academically and personally. Ignoring this reality is a step backward from the progress made through HB 4082, which emphasized the importance of afterschool and summer enrichment.

On behalf of the families and youth we serve, I urge you to vote NO on HB 2007 and instead advocate for comprehensive learning opportunities that include both summer and afterschool programs.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to Oregon's children and families.

Sincerely,

Viviana Ortiz

Adelante Mujeres, Chicas Family Support Facilitator