Submitter: Danielle Maillard

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB749

Chair Frederick, Vice Chair Weber, and members of the Senate Committee on Education,

My name is Danielle Maillard and I live in Pacific City, Oregon. I am writing to testify in strong support of the School Participatory Budgeting Act, SB 749, which will create a $500,000 pilot program that would allow students to decide investments in their schools, thereby enhancing their educational environment and preparing students to be lifelong civic participants.

I had the opportunity to see firsthand the exceptional benefits of participatory budgeting at the local level when living in Portland. Youth Voice, Youth Vote is one of many stellar examples in the country of a program that uplifts youth and teaches them skills about financial literacy, community development, and so much more. Other examples like School Participatory Budgeting in Arizona have set a precedent for what equitable and meaningful investment in our country's schools looks like, as students from diverse backgrounds are emboldened in decision-making processes that impact them and positive youth-adult partnerships are cultivated. With the future of federal investment in our education systems at risk, this is the time to pass legislation like SB 749; it will only lead to positive lasting impacts for Oregon schools.

As an informal educator that has supported students in learning about policy, and the laws and regulations that affect them, I have seen students go from passive learners to inspiring leaders when given tools to use their voice and influence positive change. If youth are expected to grow up and be the leaders that our society needs, adults today must create the foundation for that to happen, and that is what this bill will do. I am urging you to pass the School Participatory Budgeting Act out of committee so we are one step closer to creating the world that our youth deserve to live and lead in.

Sincerely,
Danielle Maillard