My name is Matt Bell, and I'm a high school history teacher at West Linn High School. I'm here today to advocate for increased K-12 funding for the next biennium to QEM level.

Governor Kotek's proposed budget does NOT adequately consider the inflationary costs and unfunded mandates from the state. By definition "roll up costs" don't account for unfunded mandates, and we are having historic inflation that seems to not be included in the budget.

Portland Public will be cutting $40 million for next year if Governor Kotek's budget passes without improvement.
Beaverton $30 million.
Eugene, likely $25 million but may take some out of their reserves depending on their next superintendent hire.
Bend-Lapine $21 million
Medford $15 million over 2 years.
Lake Oswego $12 million next year
Canby $6 million next year. To name a few.
Keep in mind that many districts are currently bargaining their contracts and don't know their expenses for next year yet. I assure you that these bargains are not going well with this proposed budget. Only districts with a local option levy, increasing enrollment, and a local budget that did not invest ESSER money on staffing will be able to avoid cuts. I encourage you to talk with Superintendents in your district.

My district West Linn-Wilsonville is facing a deficit of $15 million next year. We have already laid off or said we will not replace 12% of our certified teaching staff --75 people who have dedicated themselves to our students. This is unacceptable in a time when there is not an economic catastrophe. Only 20% of our reduction is based on lower revenue from lower enrollment and undermines the investments you as legislators have specifically made. We are losing 23 Primary staff members trained in our latest literacy adoption. We are cutting our 4 Literacy Coaches who also do high dosage literacy interventions to help students who need the most. We are losing 2.4 Student Services Specialists who help make sure that our Special Education students with the highest level of needs can be included. We are cutting half of our Freshman Success leaders. We cutting losing administrators necessary to help intervene and lead our schools. We are losing paraeducators who provide necessary support. Students will experience average class sizes of 28 in our primary schools and an added 4-6 students per class at Middle and High because we will

have fewer teachers. We will not have literacy or math intervention classes at the Middle School level because we don't have the FTE to do it. We know that these decisions are not best for students, but our district is doing it because of Governor Kotek's proposed budget.

I saw Governor Kotek and Senator Wagner's presentation to the Education Ways and Means Committee, and I share the skepticism that Senator Wagner noted on your faces during their presentation.

First, I will note that Governor Kotek had NO specific examples of "School Districts doing it right." If you're funding 197 different school districts, and you can't offer any excellent examples, that's the biggest evidence of systemic underfunding. Past budgets may have raised spending, but we are so far below QEM that legislators are not taking that number seriously. Many school districts are doing well with parts and are starting to see improvement after restructuring supports for students since COVID shutdowns, so not maintaining what we currently have will definitely make results go the wrong direction. I would encourage you to look at Amanda Norman's testimony about the improvements at our Title I school Boones Ferry. They are mid-turnaround, so axing so many staff members there will be detrimental to the growth that was starting to occur.

Accountability is a multi-way street. We are willing to be accountable. Our district leaders are willing to be accountable. Are YOU willing to be accountable to properly funding schools so we can meet the needs of our students?