



Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Fragala and Harbick, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rebekah Bassett, I work for CASA of Oregon, and I am here today to urge you to support HB 3809, with the -1 amendment.

CASA of Oregon has been fortunate to work with IDA savers for over twenty years. In that time, countless individuals and families had opportunities open to them because they had support from this program. We are one of 11 fiduciary organizations awarded direct funding from this program which we then subgrant through a network of 60 nonprofit organizations and educational institutions across 32 counties.

At CASA we offer two types of education IDAs. One serves Mt Hood Community College, Clatsop Community College, and several rural high schools. The other is a partnership with the Oregon Alliance of Independent Colleges and Universities, serving 8 of the private colleges and universities in Oregon. Through these relationships, we have created access to a college education at low or no cost for many students over the years. Those who enroll in our program are often ineligible for federal need-based aid, or they have unmet financial need and are forced to take on student debt. Because of the IDA, many graduate debt free or with significantly less debt. Since we began providing IDAs, we have served roughly 2700 students paying over \$12,000,000 in matching funds for tuition.

Today we are serving approximately 200 students with an IDA each year. Without a fix to our funding, the number of students we can serve will drop to less than 100 each year. Additionally, the cost of attending college is climbing, which means that students will be needing more resources and may be forced to take on more debt or postpone completing their education goals.

As a program provider serving savers from Portland to Ontario, I can tell you that without more funding, opportunities will disappear for those across the state who need our support. These resources, the financial education and the coaching that complement this program give savers tools for today and for tomorrow. By passing HB 3809-1, the Legislature can "Fix the Funding" and return the IDA program to solid financial footing. I urge you to pass this bill. Thank you for your time today.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rebekah Bassett".

Rebekah Bassett
Family Economic Opportunity Program Director
CASA of Oregon