

Submitter: Jazzmin Reece
On Behalf Of: Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5516

Good afternoon Co-Chairs Sen Sollman, and Rep Ruiz, and legislators of the committee:

My name is Jazzmin Reece, and I am a resident of SW Portland. My children attend a Portland Public Elementary School, where I also volunteer on the Board of its affiliated PTA.

Two years ago, on March 27, 2023, I got myself and my two boys suited and booted and we drove down to Salem, to hold our time on the dais to testify in person, and in opposition of the 2023 HB 5015. For those who were not in attendance, or who have not reviewed the recording, my words today have not changed, and my opposition of the 2025 SB 5516 is for the same reasons. The Oregon Democratic Super Majority needs to fully fund public education.

- Stop referencing the Student Success Act, which is nothing more than a Libertarian grift to fund program grants, which still require specialized staff to write the grant to get the money, and trained staff to administer the programs, with monies that are not exempt to non-public school entities.
- Stop talking about respecting diversity and inclusivity. There is nothing respectful or inclusive about allowing a generation of diverse learners to be lost in the wind because their education is not meeting them, and their family where they are at due to underfunded schools.
- Stop telling disadvantaged communities and minor children that they need to “show up in Salem” and let their voices be heard to get the funding they need.
- Start restoring public education justice to Oregonians by fully funding the QEM at \$13.526B

Public education is the one common good that has the ability to raise a generation out of poverty and change lives. By not following the expert advice of the AIR study, to fully fund the QEM+, and by refusing to lift SPED caps, and simply funding current levels of service, you are responsible for holding a generation of Oregonians back, and setting up the backdrop for an Oregon that cannot compete in an economic landscape that is post-industrial, and requires the basic or advanced literacy and math competencies to fill skilled wage jobs.

We do not get to affordable housing without living wages, and those wages are not possible without an educated workforce to retain major high wage employers. WorkSystems Inc., our regional expert on the labor force, has indicated that low skill and low wage jobs are the bulk of our region’s employment profile. Additionally, home price appreciation in the region has increased at a rate of 7:1, outpacing wages. To change what we see on the streets, starts with education, and now is the time for you to make the right investment in Oregon revenue.

Thank you for your time, fully fund the QEM+ at \$13.526B.