

Submitter: Emma Rohwer

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee
On Education

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5516

I am the mother of two students in Portland Public Schools. The education they have received so far has been excellent, but it is clear to me that their teachers are holding things together with baling wire and duct tape and are teaching out of a sense of mission despite low salaries and inadequate resources. A system that relies on passion to fill the gaps left by missing money is both exploitative and unsustainable.

I believe that well-funded schools are both a way to support and enrich the lives of individual children in the present and also a common-sense investment in the future. Given federal de-investment in education, it falls to us at the state level to pool our resources to prepare the next generation of Oregonians for the future. I understand that the uncertainty of the present moment makes conservative spending attractive. But I sincerely believe that if we offer today's kids a substandard education, Oregon will be dealing with the consequences in terms of social problems and an ill-prepared workforce for decades to come.

I support reforms to our taxation system—including the end of the “kicker” and the repeal of property tax limits—whatever is needed to get our education funding up to a level we can be proud of. To be clear, I am willing to pay more every year, myself, in taxes, to support all of Oregon's children and all of Oregon's teachers, across the state.