

Submitter: Nancy Montgomery
On Behalf Of: SB5516
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

To: Join Ways and Means Subcommittee on Education
From: Nancy Montgomery,
Re: SB 5515 -- Funding for Education
Date: April 16, 2025

To the Co-Chair, Sollman, Co-Chair Ruiz, and Members of the JWM Subcommittee on Education:

I speak in support of funding the Head Start Education Program for at-risk preschoolers. We must equip all the children of Oregon with the best education possible, from early childhood through post-secondary school. And Head Start gathers up those who struggle, from families who struggle, to help set them on a path of community and education giving them a much stronger chance to thrive alongside their peers, and onward, in our future communities.

The physical and organizational structures for Head Start are all deeply in place. Given that the federal government has cut funding for Head Start from their budget completely, it's more important than ever for Oregon to step up to fill in the gap. If we lose funding now and, with it, all the infrastructure, it'll be so much more challenging to start again, to regain the support created for this population; to help them get - because they're starting behind other populations - a head start in joining their peers from a more balanced place.

We find the budget as expressed in SB 5515 inadequate to provide the quality education all our children need and deserve. The testimony submitted thus far is full of evidence about specific programs that improve student success and build the educated citizenry we need for tomorrow. They all help certain populations and can't afford cuts. We can do better. We must do better at prioritizing education.

I realize that as committee members, you represent the chamber and thus all Oregonians, so I'm a grateful constituent of each of you in this way. Thank you. I urgently request that you to find a way, find the willpower, to amend this budget to meet the recommendations from the Quality Education Commission Report, and INCLUDE Head Start. Prioritize our children, AND the least-prepared among them: fund Head

Start.

Gratefully, for your work in our world,
Nancy Montgomery,
Concerned Parent, Citizen and Constituent in rural Astoria