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Senate Committee On Education  
HB 3038-A

Hello chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber and members of the Senate Education Committee, my name is Adam Logan, I identify as hard of hearing (HH) when disclosing my hearing ability. In my most recent position I worked as a HH advocate with Bridges Oregon, a culturally and linguistically appropriate non-profit organization that works with the deaf, hard of hearing, deafblind and with additional disabilities. I have also worked as a Personal Support Worker, Home Care Worker, and as a Life Coach in the deaf and hard of hearing (DHH), and occasionally hearing people. I am a former secretary for the Oregon Association of the Deaf, I functioned like a vice president as that role was not filled during my tenure among many other hats.

I am interested in the sections pertaining to the Oregon School for the Deaf. Section 7 of HB 3038-A. I overall support the amendment. The one thing that concerns me is that the language still seems to indicate that the Oregon School for the Deaf is a last resort option, under HB 3038-A Section 7 (4) it reads:

The school shall be operated primarily for the provision of education and training services for children who are deaf, hard of hearing or deaf-blind **and who cannot be efficiently served in other schools or programs.**

I was raised in mainstream programs, and even though I had supports in place, I floundered and felt incredibly isolated, my academic progress was stunted. The only time I had peers like me that I could sign with and fully communicate was during recess. Having ASL interpreters is helpful and I appreciate them so much. In my experience, I need to equivocate that interpreters do not equate to full and inclusive communication, social, or education access.

In my junior year of middle school, I was on a trajectory to winding up in a juvenile correction center. My mother recognized that mainstream education wasn't working for me, and decided to transfer me to the Oregon School for the Deaf (OSD). I was resistant to attending OSD at first, after a few months there I sighed when I realized I could relax. It would take a couple years for me to process my anger, and to really start to tune in to learning. Attending OSD turned out to be the best thing that ever happened to me. I sincerely believe I would be in prison or dead rather than writing you this letter had my mother not made that decision to send me to OSD.

Thinking back, I wish I had started out at OSD. I could be so much further along in life educationally, vocationally, and socially.

This bill is a technical bill, and the amendments to section 7 is a minor improvement over the status quo. What I propose is an additional amendment to remove the text "and who cannot be efficiently served in other schools or programs" from HB 3038-A Section 7 (4).

The decision to send a child to OSD is not an easy decision to make, especially if the family does not live close to Salem. The status quo of sending their children to their local public or private school and only opening up the option to go to OSD if the student fails in local schools is unnecessarily meddling with the already difficult choice of the family. Sending a child to a deaf school is a deeply personal decision. Please remove any barrier to the decision to send a child to OSD than there already inherently is (distance, culture, linguistic values). The only eligibility requirement of sending a child to OSD should be as simple as: The child is legally deaf; the child is a resident of Oregon; and the child is the correct age or developmentally delayed and needs extra support to learn activities of daily living.

In mainstream programs, having an interpreter students who are deaf, or hard of hearing have less than a handful of people who have trained to facilitate communication, they have read a few books, but they don't really understand the student, it takes more than one person to raise a person well, as the idiom goes, it takes a village (community). As an alumni of OSD, I can't tell you how valuable it was to have faculty and staff and peers that really understood me, it made all the difference in my motivation to participate in my education once I felt secure socially being immersed in the community of a deaf school.

Please consider my proposed amendment. Whether or not my proposed amendment is made, HB 3038-A Section 7 represents an improvement over the original bill, I support passing the bill assuming all the other sections checks out.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, I avail myself at your convenience.

Respectfully, Adam Logan

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